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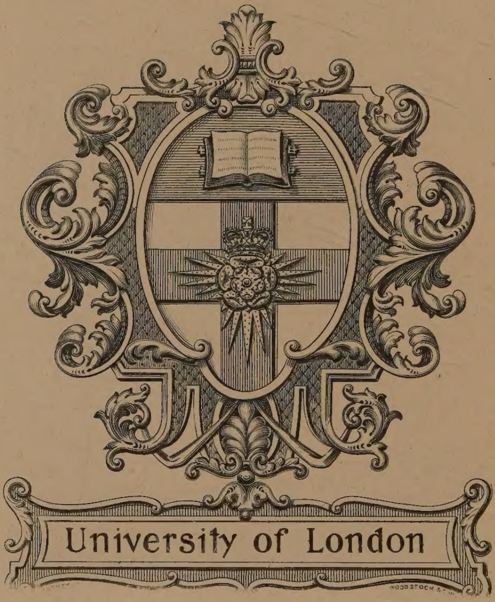
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

4 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXXX.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF
FEBRUARY TO THE SECOND DAY OF MARCH, 1904.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION.

1904.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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INEBRIATES' ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS) (IRELAND).—Paper [presented 16th February] to be printed. [No. 59.] 3

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT COMMITTEE.—Copy presented, of Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the question of Musical Copyright, with separate Report by Mr. J. Caldwell, M.P., and Minutes of Evidence [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 3

MILITARY WORKS ACTS, 1897, 1899, AND 1901.—Account presented, for the period ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 60.] 4

NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES).—Annual Account presented, for the period ended 20th November, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 61.] 4

NATIONAL DEBT (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Account presented, of the Gross Amount of all Moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of the Fund for Military Savings Banks, from 19th September, 1845, to the 5th January, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 62.] 4

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.—Accounts presented, for the year ended 21st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 63.] 4

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1903–4).—Copy presented, of Estimate of the Further Amount required during the year ending 31st March, 1904, beyond the sum already provided in the Grant for Navy Services for the year [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 64.] .. 4

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NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.—Estimates presented, for the year 1904-5 with Explanation of Differences [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 65.] 4

NAVY (STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF ESTIMATES).—Copy presented, of Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1904-5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 4

COLONIAL REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS).—Copy presented, of Report No. 26 (Nigeria, Report on a Series of Mineral and Vegetable Products from Northern Nigeria, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, Director of the Imperial Institute) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 5

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Resident Magistrates (Belfast) Bill.—"To make provision for the appointment and remuneration of Resident Magistrates in Belfast," presented by Sir James Haslett; supported by Mr. Wolff, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, and Mr. O'Doherty; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 70.].. 25

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Winter Assizes (Ireland) Bill.—" To extend the jurisdiction of Winter Assizes in Ireland," presented by Sir James Haslett; supported by Mr. Wolff, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Thomas Corbett, Mr. O'Doherty, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 71.] 25

Registration of Firms Bill.—" For the registration of firms and persons carrying on business under trade names," presented by Mr Emmott; supported by Mr. James Heath, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Holland, and Mr. Walter Palmer; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed [Bill 72.] 25

Electric Lighting (London) Bill.—" To provide for the adjustment, in accordance with changes of boundary effected under the London Government Act, 1899, of the areas within which local authorities and companies are authorised to supply electricity," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Bonar Law; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 69.] 25

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Acts relating to Crofters' Holdings in Scotland," presented by Mr. Ainsworth; supported by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Weir, and Mr. Harmsworth; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 73.] 26

Congested Districts (Scotland) Act (1897) Amendment Bill.—" To amend the provisions of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, as to the application of the fund constituted by the Act; and for other purposes" presented by Mr. Ainsworth; supported by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Weir, and Mr. Harmsworth; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 74.] 26

Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill.—" To provide for the Taxation for local purposes of Land Values in burghs in Scotland," presented by Mr. Caldwell; supported by Mr. J. H. Whitley, Mr. Hunter Craig, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. John Hope, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. Dobbie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 75.] 26

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—[TWELFTH DAY].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [16th February] to Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." —(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly expedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained.' "—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

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Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) .. 37
Sir John Rolleston (Leicester) .. 47
Captain Ellice (St. Andrews Burghs) .. 51
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Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) .. 60
Sir H. Meysey-Thompson (Staffordshire, Handsworth) .. 64
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Mr. Seely (Lincoln) .. 72
Mr. Atherley-Jones (Durham, N. W.) .. 75
Mr. William Watson Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) .. 76
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) .. 78
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) ..

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [16th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

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Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.) .. 85
Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.) .. 90
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) .. 93
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) .. 102
The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) .. 107

Mr. Akers Douglas rose in his place, and claimed to move "That Question be now put."

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Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 330 ; Noes, 172. (Division List No. 3.)

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there added."

The House divided :—Ayes, 230 ; Noes, 281. (Division List No. 4.)

Main Question again proposed.

And it being after Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power [H.L.]; Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power [H.L.]; Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway [H.L.]; Trafford Park Dock and Railway [H.L.]; Victoria University of Yorkshire [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Elysée Palace Hotel Company [H.L.] 129

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And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Mid-Cheshire Tramways 129

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—

Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways; London United Tramways; London United Tramways (Railways).

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 129

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; Rotherham Corporation Bill; Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways Bill; London United Tramways Bill; London United Tramways (Railways) Bill. Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next 129

Govan Burgh Electricity Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1a. 129

Bristol Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.].—Presented; read 1a; and referred to the Examiners 129

York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2a. 130

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IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Return for the month of December. 1903. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 130

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.—Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Lancaster in the year ended 21st December, 1903; also, a separate account of the capital of the said Duchy to the same date 130

INEBRIATES' ACT, 1898.—Regulations for the management of State inebriate reformatories in Ireland 130

NATIONAL DEBT.

I. (Military Savings Banks)—Account of gross amount of all moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of the "Fund for Military Savings Banks."

II. (Savings Banks and Friendly Societies)—Account of the gross amount of all sums received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of banks for savings and friendly societies in Great Britain and Ireland, from their commencement at 6th August, 1817, to 20th November, 1903, exclusive.

Account of the several transactions which have taken place, during the year ended 20th November, 1903, in the investment of all moneys which came into the hands of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt for savings banks and friendly societies.

Account showing the aggregate amount of the liabilities of the Government to the trustees of savings banks and friendly societies respectively on 20th November, 1903, etc.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 130

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Committee of Selection.—The Lords following, viz. :—

E. Chesterfield.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Churchill.
L. Balfour.
L. Ribblesdale.

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the Five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each proposed Private Bill 131

Standing Orders Committee.—Appointed : The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee :—

M. Salisbury (*L. Privy Seal*)
D. Bedford.
D. Marlborough.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Cadogan.
E. Howe.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Dartrey.
E. Lytton.
E. Carrington.
E. Crewe.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Knutsford.
V. Ridley.
V. Churchill.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Barnard.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Poltimore.
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Fermanagh (*E. Erne.*)
L. Lamington.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Newton.
L. Welby.
L. Ludlow.

All petitions relating to the Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered 131

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.]—(*The Lord Ribblesdale*).

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]—(*The Lord Ribblesdale*). Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read, and discharged 132

FISCAL POLICY.

The Earl of Crewe 132

Moved to resolve, "That no duty upon imports into the United Kingdom from foreign countries or from British colonies and dependencies, should be imposed, modified, or removed, without the formal consent of Parliament to each such proposal."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 149
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) 162

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the words after 'that' for the purpose of inserting the following words, 'This House, while affirming the constitutional doctrine that all fiscal arrangements of this country must be subject to the full and effective control of Parliament over taxation, is not prepared to lay down rules for the guidance of future Parliaments as to the exact method in which such control should be exercised by them in cases which may hereafter arise.'"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

Lord Tweedmouth 175
Lord Hylton 185
Lord Byron 190
Lord Brassey 191
Lord Avebury 193
The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) 199
Lord Coleridge 206
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*) 211
Lord Monteagle of Brandon 222

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Duke of Devonshire*).

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at half-past Eleven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—

Torquay Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 227

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SUBSTITUTED BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Docks) ; Clyde Navigation (Works) .. 227

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chirman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following case, viz. :—Mid-Cheshire Tramways 227

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.—"To enable the London County Council to construct and work new tramways in the counties of London and Middlesex ; to alter and reconstruct tramways in the county of London ; to make street improvements in the counties of London, Kent, and Middlesex ; to empower the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich to construct a new street ; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time ; and ordered to be read a second time .. 228

Rotherham Corporation Bill.—" To provide for altering the wards of the County Borough of Rotherham and for increasing the number of aldermen and councillors ; to confer further powers on the Corporation of the borough in regard to their gas, water, tramways, and electrical undertakings ; to make further provisions for the health, improvement and local government of the borough ; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time ; and ordered to be read a second time.. 228

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LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law ; from Kidderminster ; Shipley ; Southend ; Birmingham ; Stoke Newington ; Crigglestone ; Knaresborough ; Sunderland ; Walton-on-the-hill ; Blandford ; Salisbury (two) ; Lewisham ; Gronant ; Newcastle-on-Tyne (two) ; Liverpool (three) ; Coventry (two) ; Whixall ; Ware ; Preston (three) ; Ravensthrope ; Thurso ; Fleetwood ; Aberdeen ; Neath ; Stourbridge ; Berwick-on-Tweed ; Stromness ; Settle ; Hirwain ; Aberdare ; Troedyrhiw (three) ; Cwmdare ; Merthyr Tydvil ; Eccles ; Bethesda ; Eccleshill ; Low Moor ; Wibsey ; Idle ; Queensbury ; Barton ; Pendlebury ; Whitchurch ; Halifax ; Bristol ; Clydebank ; Sheffield ; Woodhouse ; Edinburgh (two) ; East Kirkby ; Pensarn ; Soar ; Bermondsey ; Tottenham ; Tanygroes ; Bethesda ; Dyffryn Dyfi ; Battersea ; and Aberdovey ; to lie upon the Table 228

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QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST (STAFF AND EQUIPMENT).—Return ordered, "of Copy of (1) Resolutions adopted by the Council of Queen's College, Belfast, on the 4th December, 1903, and by the Corporate Body on 9th December, 1903 ; (2) Irish Government Letter of 17th December, 1903, in acknowledgment of same ; (3) Letter of 11th January, 1904, from the President of University College, Dublin ; and (4) Irish Government Letter of 15th January, 1904, in acknowledgment of same."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

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CONDITION OF MRS. MAYBRICK'S RELEASE.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport) ; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 231

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ACCIDENTS IN TRANSVAAL MINES.—Questions, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield), Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield), Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland), Mr. John Burns (Battersea), and Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 241

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IRISH EQUIVALENT GRANT.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 256

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LAND PURCHASE IN GALWAY.—Questions, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.) and Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 258

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CASTLE OF ARDANDRA, COUNTY LONGFORD.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 260

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 260

Electric Lighting (London) Bill.—Ordered, "That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Electric Lighting (London) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Order relative to Private Bills." —(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) 260

NEW BILLS.

House-Letting (Scotland) Bill.—"To deal with the system of House-letting in the boroughs of Scotland," presented by Mr. Alexander Cross; supported by Mr. T. W. Russell and Sir John Leng; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 79] 260

Jurors' Expenses Bill.—"To provide for the payment of the Expenses of Jurors attending assizes and quarter sessions," presented by Mr. Lloyd-Morgan; supported by Mr. Wharton, Mr. Abel Thomas, and Mr. John Hutton; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 77] 261

Mortgage of Premises Bill.—"To amend the Law in regard to the Mortgaging of Premises containing Trade Machinery," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 78] .. 261

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Canal Traffic Bill—"To provide for the better regulation of Canal Traffic," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Sir John Brunner, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Field, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. J. H. Whitley, and Mr. Wolff; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 79] 261

Bills of Exchange Bill.—"To provide for the registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange, and to allow summary judgment thereon," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 80] 261

Provisional Order (Marriages) Bill.—"To enable Provisional Orders to be made for removing any invalidity or doubt attaching to marriages by reason of some informality," presented by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 81] 261

Police (Superannuation) Bill.—"To amend the Police Act, 1890, with respect to the Pensions of Constables who continue to serve after they have become entitled to a Pension," presented by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 82] 261

Rating of Machinery Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Rating of Hereditaments containing Machinery," presented by Mr. Chapman; supported by Sir Edward Strachey, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Cawley, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Emmott, and Colonel Royds; to be read second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 83] 262

School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill.—"To admit to the School Board Electorate of Scotland persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Bignold, Mr. Harmsworth, and Mr. Caldwell; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 15th March, and to be printed. [Bill 84] 262

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill.—"To amend The Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Bignold, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. Caldwell; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 15th March, and to be printed. [Bill 85] 262

Penal Servitude Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Penal Servitude in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 86] .. 262

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—[THIRTEENTH DAY].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

Amendment proposed—

Mr. P. A. McHugh (*Leitrim, N.*) 263
Mr. J. P. Farrell (*Longford, N.*) 279

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that serious Amendments including the abolition of the zones system are required in the Irish Land Act of last year to prevent the unjust inflation of the price of land in Ireland; and that the powers possessed under that Act by the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board for the acquisition of untenanted lands are not sufficient to provide a remedy for the evils of congestion by the redistribution of the land among the population of the poor districts of the country, without which the Irish Land Question can never be settled; and that a power of compulsory purchase of untenanted lands such as the Congested Districts Board unanimously asked for in 1895 should be conferred upon that body and upon the Estates Commissioners acting under the Land Act of 1903, and that provision should be made that sales in cases of congested estates under that Act should be made only to the Board or the Estate Commissioners.'"—(*Mr. P. A. McHugh.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 285
Mr. Clancy (*Dublin County, N.*) 293
Mr. Hemphill (*Tyrone, N.*) 297
Mr. Coghill (*Stoke-upon-Trent*) 300
Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (*Kerry, W.*) 302
Mr. O'Dowd (*Sligo, S.*) 305

And it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [18th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that serious Amendments, including the abolition of the zones system, are required in the Irish Land Act of last year to prevent the unjust inflation of the price of land in Ireland; and that the powers possessed under that Act by the Estates Commissioners and the

Congested Districts Board for the acquisition of untenanted lands are not sufficient to provide a remedy for the evils of congestion by the redistribution of the land among the population of the poor districts of the country, without which the Irish land question can never be settled; and that a power of compulsory purchase of untenanted lands such as the Congested Districts Board unanimously asked for in 1895 should be conferred upon that body and upon the Estates Commissioners acting under the Land Act of 1903; and that provision should be made that sales in cases of congested estates under that Act should be made only to the Board or the Estates Commissioners.' "—(*Mr. P. A. McHugh.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. O'Dowd 307
Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 314
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 314
Mr. Cullinan (*Tipperary, S.*) 316
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 319
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 323
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 335
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 339

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 124; Noes, 219. (Division List No. 5.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Mid-Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1^a 345

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with. Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal [H.L.]; Young and Bell's Patents [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of time) [H.L.]; Gosport Water [H.L.]; New River Company [H.L.]; New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 345

lford Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Lothians Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 345

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Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Filey Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Shipley Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]. Committed 345

Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bridlington Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Buxton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Derwent Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ebbw Vale Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad Bill [H.L.]; Holywood Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]; Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ulster Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 345

PETITION.

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill [H.L.].—Petition in favour of; of Corporation of Lewisham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 346

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (NEW SCHEME OF TRAINING).—Reports of the members of the Interview Committee on the selection of candidates for nomination as Naval Cadets. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 346

LOAN SOCIETIES.—Abstract of accounts of loan societies in England and Wales furnished to the Central Office for the Registry of Friendly Societies, for the year ended 31st December, 1902. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 346

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committed to it by the House 347

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.—Appointed : The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee :—

E. Cowper.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Churchill.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*).

NEW BILL.

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for re-arranging the Boundaries of the Dioceses of Bristol and Gloucester and Bath and Wells—Was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury (for the Lord Bishop of Bristol) ; read 1^a ; and to be printed. (No. 13) 347

Newcastle Chapter Amendment Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Bishop of St. Albans 347

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2^a "—(*The Lord Bishop of St. Albans.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

FISCAL POLICY—DUTIES ON IMPORTS.—Order of the Day read for the adjourned debate on the Motion of the Earl of Crewe, to resolve, " That no duty upon imports into the United Kingdom from Foreign Countries, or from British Colonies and Dependencies, should be imposed, modified, or removed, without the formal consent of Parliament to each such proposal ; " and on the Amendment moved by the Marquess of Salisbury to the foregoing Motion, viz. :—

> " To leave out all the words after ' that ' for the purpose of inserting the following words, viz. : ' This House, while affirming the constitutional doctrine that all the fiscal arrangements of this country must be subject to the full and effective control of Parliament over taxation, is not prepared to lay down rules for the guidance of future Parliaments as to the exact method in which such control should be exercised by them in cases which may hereafter arise.' "

The Duke of Devonshire 348
The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 364
Lord James of Hereford 369
Lord Burghclere 379
Lord Farrer 389
Earl Carrington 393
The Marquess of Northampton 398
Lord Robertson 404
Earl Cadogan 413
Earl Spencer 423
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) .. 430

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On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion, their Lordships divided.

Contents, 47 ; Not-Contents, 98.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

House Adjourned at Twelve o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill ; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill ; Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill ; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill ; North Staffordshire Railway Bill ; Surrey Commercial Dock Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 443

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered ; to be read the third time upon Monday next 443

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law : From Onslow Square ; Moss Side ; Rivington ; Wallsend ; Saffron Walden ; Parton ; Hatch Beauchamp ; Heart Brook ; Wolverhampton ; Gosport ; Havant ; Newburn ; West Cramlington ; Preston (two) ; Winchmore Hill ; Cartmel ; Dewsbury ; West Allotment ; Deptford ; Alexander M'Nabb and others ; North Walbottle ; Mostyn ; Port Talbot ; Plasmore ; Eastbourne ; Clayton le Moors ; Mossy Lea ; Greenock ; Noel Park ; Belmont ; Llangranog ; Hermon ; Bedford ; Tynant ; Women's Christian Temperance Association ; Manchester ; Anfield ; Capel Drindod ; Five Oak Green ; South Ockenden ; Dolton ; Llandilo ; Llanwchllyn ; Liverpool ; Carmarthen ; Falmouth ; Measham ; East Somerset ; Melbourne ; and New Barnet ; to lie upon the Table 443

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Washford, against ; to lie upon the Table 444

SOUTH AFRICA (CHINESE LABOUR).—Petition from Guildford, against establishment ; to lie upon the Table 444

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (NEW SCHEME OF TRAINING).—Copy presented, of Reports of Members of the Interview Committee on the selection of Candidates for nominations as Naval Cadets [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 444

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Loan Societies.—Abstract of Accounts of Loan Societies in England and Wales to 31st December, 1902, furnished to the Central Office for the Registry of Friendly Societies [by Act] 444

ADJOURNMENT.—Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 444

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

TANAT VALLEY RAILWAY—INCREASED GOVERNMENT GRANT.—Question, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 444

INCREASED HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION AT ANSTRUTHER, FIFE.—Question, Captain Ellice (St. Andrews Burghs); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 445

CONSTITUTION OF CONSULAR SERVICE.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Earl Percy 445

ALIENS WORKING IN BRITISH COAL MINES.—Questions, Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas 446

ELECTRICITY IN MINES—REPORT OF COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Markham; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 447

IRISH VALUATION COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 447

INCREASED PAY TO JOINERS IN NAVAL ORDNANCE DEPARTMENTS.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Arthur Lee 447

INDIAN NATIVE STATES ADMINISTERED BY POLITICAL AGENTS.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick .. 448

CONSTRUCTION OF PIER AT BUNERANA.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 448

IRISH ANCIENT MONUMENTS, GREENAN HILL.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 448

GUN LICENCES IN IRELAND—CASE OF MR. JAMES FLYNN.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 449

PROMOTION OF POLICE AT BELFAST.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 449

3RD BATTALION KING'S ROYAL RIFLES.—Question, Captain Ellice; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 450

SALE OF SURPLUS WAR STORES—ACTUAL RECEIPTS.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 450

INDIAN AND COLONIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARMY.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 450

ERECTION OF BARRACKS AT DINGWALL.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 451

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KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS). [FOURTEENTH DAY.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign*—

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*) Main question again proposed.

Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 451
Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 466

Amendment proposed—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' And further we desire humbly to express our regret that, in view of the distress arising from lack of employment, Your Majesty's advisers have not seen fit to recommend the creation of a Department and Minister of Labour fully empowered, *inter alia*, to deal effectively, acting in conjunction with local administrative authorities, with such lack of employment, mainly by the execution of necessary public works, afforestation, and further by encouraging an increase in the numbers of those employed in agricultural pursuits.' "—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there added."

Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 474
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 478
Mr. Louis Sinclair (*Essex, Romford*) 483
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 486
Mr. David MacIver (*Liverpool, Kirkdale*) 488
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 489
Sir John Brunner (*Cheshire, Northwich*) 491
Mr. J. H. Lewis (*Flint Boroughs*) 493
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 495
Sir William Tomlinson (*Preston*) 497
The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 49
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 502
Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 505

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 151 ; Noes, 231. (Division List No. 6.)

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put."

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 232 ; Noes, 139. (Division List No. 7.)

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Page

Resolved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

SUPPLY.—Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented to this House during the present session be referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) 515

WAYS AND MEANS.—Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) 515

NEW BILLS.

COTTAGE HOMES.—Bill to authorise the provision of Cottage Homes for the aged poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Brigg, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Sir William Wilson-Todd.

Cottage Homes Bill.—"To authorise the provision of Cottage Homes for the aged poor," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 87.] 515

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.—Bill to enable Local Authorities to adopt the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, ordered to be brought in by Captain Jessel, Mr. Hay, Mr. Bell, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Louis Sinclair, Sir Carne Rasch, Dr. Rutherfoord Harris, Mr. Atherley-Jones, and Mr. Bill.

Local Authorities' Officers' Superannuation Bill.—"To enable Local Authorities to adopt the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th February, and to be printed. [Bill 88.] 515

SALE OF BUTTER.—Bill to amend the Law with regard to the Sale of Butter, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Mr. Long, and Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Sale of Butter Bill.—"To amend the Law with regard to the Sale of Butter," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 89.] 516

DOGS.—Bill to consolidate and amend the enactments relating to injury to live stock by Dogs, and otherwise to amend the Law relating to Dogs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Mr. Long, and Mr. Solicitor-General.

Dogs Bill.—" To consolidate and amend the enactments relating to injury to live stock by Dogs, and otherwise to amend the Law relating to Dogs," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 90.] 516

Adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.—MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with. Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad. The same was ordered to lie on Table 517

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn 517

Gosport Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 517

New River Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed 517

Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) Bill [H.L.] ; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.] ; Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 517

Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company Bill [H.L.] ; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed 517

Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.].—Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 517

West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.] ;—Elysée Palace Hotel Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed.. 517

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 517

Govan Burgh Electricity Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed 517

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Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]—Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 517

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed 518

Belfast and North-East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 518

West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—The LORD BALFOUR informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with 518

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COMMERCIAL, NO. 2 (1904).—Reports by His Majesty's Representatives Abroad on bounties other than those on shipping and navigation paid by the State in the countries in which they reside (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, Commercial, No. 7. (1895), [Cd. 7897]. 518

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

Memorandum summarising the regulations in force in Foreign Countries with regard to British commercial travellers.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table. 518

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.—Annual statistical report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, for the year 1902–1903. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 518

THE IRISH LAND ACT.

Lord Muskerry 518

Moved to resolve, " That the failure of the Land Act, 1903, to settle the land question, to promote goodwill between landlord and tenant, or even to check emigration, is due to the facts that the only classes it proposes to benefit are the substantial farmers already amply benefited by previous legislation, and that practically nothing has been done for the small tenants and cottiers, while at the same time the employment of labour has been, and will be still more, seriously affected by the displacement and exile of a residential proprietary and of the employing classes dependent on them ; and therefore it is advisable to suspend the working of the said Act, as well as the further action of the Land Commission dealing with the fixing of rents, until such time as a proper inquiry can be made into the effect of such legislation on the poorer classes in Ireland."—(*Lord Muskerry.*)

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The Duke of Abercorn 525
The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (*Lord Ashbourne*) 526

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee.—Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve on the Standing Committee—

L. Archbishop of Canterbury.
E. Halsbury. (*L. Chancellor.*)
L. Archbishop of York.
E. Vane. (*M. Londonderry.*) (*L. President.*)
M. Salisbury. (*L. Privy Seal.*)
D. Bedford.
D. Devonshire.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
M. Bath.
E. Clarendon. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Stamford.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Carnwath.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Portsmouth.
E. Hardwicke.
E. Spencer.
E. Malmesbury.
E. Westmeath.
E. Belmore.
E. Onslow.
E. Grey.
E. Morley.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. Lichfield.
E. Yarborough.
E. Dartrey.
E. Northbrook.
E. Lytton.
E. Selborne.
E. Ancaster.
E. Crewe.
V. Falkland.
V. Gordon (*E. Aberdeen*).
V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*).
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
L. Ashcombe.
L. Hawkesbury.
L. Stanmore.

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L. Davey.
L. Burghclere.
L. James.
V. Knutsford.
V. Llandaff.
V. Goschen.
V. Ridley.
V. Churchill.
L. Bp. London.
L. Bp. Hereford.
L. Bp. Rochester.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Windsor.
L. Clifford, of Chudleigh.
L. Barnard.
L. Saltoun.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery*).
L. Kenyon.
L. Stewart of Garlies (*E. Galloway*).
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Harris.
L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*).
L. Kilmarnock (*E. Errol*).
L. Poltimore.
L. Denman.
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*).
L. Leigh.
L. Elgin (*E. Elgin and Kincardine*).
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Kinnaird.
L. Lawrence.
L. Wolverton.
L. Sandhurst.
L. Aberdare.
L. Norton.
L. Reay.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Northbourne.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Ashbourne.
L. Thring.
L. Macnaghten
L. Heneage.
L. Ludlow.
L. Glanusk.
L. Avebury.
L. Alverstone.
L. Allerton.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 530

Adjourned at ten minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Midland Railway Bill, Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 530

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following case, viz. :—Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad 530

Electric Lighting (London) Bill (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 18th day of this instant February, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting (London) Bill 530

Brixham Gas Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill; Ryde Gas Bill; Southend-on-Sea Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed 531

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 531

Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Bill.—"To authorise the trustees of the Clyde Navigation to construct a dock at Shieldhall, and other works; to borrow additional money; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time 531

Clyde Navigation (Works) Bill.—"To authorise the trustees of the Clyde Navigation to construct quays, wharves, and basins at Yorkhill and Merklands, and river walls, tramways, and other works; to make further provision with respect to the storage of goods, tolls, and rates, and the borrowing of additional money; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time 531

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do nominate a Committee, not exceeding Eleven Members, to be called the Police and Sanitary Committee, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the provisions of the general Law.

"That Standing Orders 150 and 173A apply to all such Bills.

"That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

"That Four be the quorum of the Committee.

"That if the Committee shall report to the Committee of Selection that any Clauses of any Bill referred to them (other than Clauses containing police and sanitary regulations) are such, as having regard to the terms of reference it is not in their opinion necessary or advisable for them to deal with, the Committee of Selection shall thereupon refer the Bill to a Select Committee, who shall consider those Clauses and so much of the Preamble of the Bill as relates thereto, and shall determine the expenditure (if any) to be authorised in respect of the parts of the Bill referred to them. That the Committee shall deal with the remaining Clauses of such Bill, and so much of the Preamble as relates thereto, and shall determine the period and mode of repayment of any money authorised by the Select Committee to be borrowed and shall report the whole Bill to the House, stating in their Report what parts of the Bill have been considered by each Committee.

"That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to sit as two Committees, and in that event to apportion the Bills referred to the Committee between the two Committees, each of which shall have the full powers of, and be subject to the instructions which apply to, the undivided Committee, and that Three be the quorum of each of the two Committees."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 533

And, it being a quarter past Two of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

PETITIONS.

Licence Holders.—Petition for redress of grievances: Whitby; and Bollington and Butley; to lie upon the Table 533

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law: from Bradford; Northumberland; Manchester; Kirkcaldy (two); Rochdale; Liskeard (two); Billshill; Port Mulgrave; Market Drayton; Melbury; Castleton; Leigh; Bannockburn; Sandgate; Chester; Bedford; Ilford; Hounslow; Ratcliffe; Ongar; Waterford; Bromley by Bow; Liverpool; Finedon (two); Kincardine; Berwick; North Salford; Penmoch; Llwynfriod; Swelson; Llwynygroes; Longsight; Weston-super-Mare; Salford; Newcastle-on-Tyne; North Hants; Handsworth; Smethwick; St. Mellons; and Newbridge; to lie upon the Table 533

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Parliamentary Constituencies (Electors, etc.) (United Kingdom).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address, 3rd February; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 69.] 534

University of Aberdeen.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen for 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 70.] 534

Foreign Bounties (Commercial, No. 2, 1904).—Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Representatives Abroad on Bounties other than those on Shipping and Navigation paid by the State in the countries in which they reside [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 534

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

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ANNUAL LEAVE IN THE EDINBURGH POST OFFICE.—Question, Sir Andrew Agnew (Edinburgh, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 541

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE STATIONS IN THE WEST HIGHLANDS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Pretyman; 542

PROGRESS OF THE DINGWALL AND CROMARTY RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 542

CHANGES IN TARIFFS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 542

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COAL SUPPLIES FOR IRISH PUBLIC BUILDINGS.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 544

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CORK POST OFFICE TELEGRAPH LEARNERS.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Lord Stanley 573

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT—TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Dr. MACNAMARA rose in his place and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The promulgation of the Ordinance providing for the introduction of Indentured Chinese Labour into the Transvaal before the Ordinance and its regulations have been discussed by the House of Commons in their complete and operative form"; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen:—The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting this day 574

NEW BILLS.

Trades Unions and Trade Disputes (No. 2) Bill.—"To legalise the peaceful conduct of Trade Disputes and to alter the Law affecting the liability of Trade Union Funds," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Keir Hardie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 91] 574

Housing of the Working Classes, etc., Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, to amend the Law of Rating, and to establish Fair Rent Courts," presented by Mr. Nannetti; supported by Mr. Harwood, Mr. Field, Captain Norton, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Bell, Mr. Crooks, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Joyce, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Jacoby, and Mr. Logan; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 92] 574

Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill.—"To enable localities by a direct vote to prevent the issue of Licences for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors," presented by Mr. Whittaker; supported by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. Burt, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. Rigg; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 93.] .. 575

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which

will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz. :—

Vote 1.—Pay, &c., of the Army	2,000,000
Vote 6.—Transport and Remounts	2,100,000
Vote 7.—Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies	2,030,000
Total	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10)	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 576
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Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 610
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 611
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 613
Mr. Gibson Bowles 614
Mr. Bromley Davenport 615
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 615
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 617
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 617
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 618
Mr. Arnold-Forster 619
Mr. Buchanan 620

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head F (B), Pay, etc. of Colonial Contingents (South Africa), be reduced by £10,000."—(*Mr, Buchanan.*)

Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) 621
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 621
Mr. Arnold-Forster 622
Mr. Gibson Bowles 622
Mr. Brodrick 622
Mr. Labouchere 623
Mr. Runciman 624
Sir Edgar Vincent 624
Mr. Arnold Forster 624
Mr. Brodrick 625
Mr. Lloyd George 625
Mr. Whitley 627

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Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 128 ; Noes, 197. (Division List No. 8).

Original Question again proposed :—

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Adjournment (under Standing Order No. 10).

Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 631
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 634

Motion made and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn."—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 636
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 637
Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 639
Mr. Cathcart Wason (*Orkney and Shetland*) 641
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 643
Mr. Ellis Gifford (*Anglesey*) 645
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham.*) 646
Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 648
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick, and Leamington*) 651
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 664

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 156 ; Noes, 212. (Division List No. 9).

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time this day.

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY BOROUGH OF BOLTON).—Return ordered, " comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an inquiry held in the county borough of Bolton into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that county borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Report on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837 ; (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the county borough ; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Reports."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*) 671

House of Commons (Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the Department of the Serjeant-at-Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Dalziel, Sir Horatio Davies, Sir Thomas Firbank, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Jacoby, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lonsdale, Dr. MacDonnel, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. George Ormsby-Gore, Mr. Pierpoint, Mr. Power, Mr. William Redmond, and Sir Harry Samuel.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 672

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS. TUESDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Clyde Valley Electrical Power Bill [H.L.].—And also the Certificate that the standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Marylebone Chapels (St. James, Westmoreland Street) (Petition for Bill). The same were ordered to lie on the Table 673

Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1ª 673

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed 673

Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways Bill; London United Tramways (Railways) Bill. The order of Thursday last referring the Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next, discharged 673

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz. :—L. Herries, L. Muncaster ; agreed to ; and the said Lords appointed accordingly .. 673

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Brought from the Commons ; read 1ª ; to be printed ; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª [The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*), and reported from the Committee. (No. 14.) .. 673

PETITIONS.

Weights and Measures (Metric System) Bill (H.L.].—Petitions in favour of ; of the Provost, etc., of Selkirk ; Corporation of Folkestone ; Corporation of Stockport ; Corporation of Chatham ; Provost, etc., of Inverness ; Corporation of Brighton ; Nottingham Chamber of Commerce ; Sheffield Chamber of

Commerce; Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce; London Association for the Protection of Trade; and Town and County Councils, Merchants, Members of Chambers of Commerce, Schoolmasters, Teachers, Ministers of Religion, Shop keepers and Retailers, Manufacturers, Engineers, Trades Unions, Members of Trades Unions and Workmen, and others. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 673

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board of Ireland in substitution for Rule 28 of 1st May, 1903 674

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.—Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Aberdeen under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act 674

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

Weights and Measures (Metric System) Bill [H.L.] [SECOND READING.]—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Belhaven of Stenton 674

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Belhaven and Stenton.*).

Lord Colchester 689
Lord Kelvin 690
Lord Wolverton 693
Earl Spencer 695
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) .. 697
The Earl of Rosebery 699
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*) 700
The Duke of Rutland 701
Lord Tweedmouth 701

On Question, Bill read 2ª—and referred to a Select Committee.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION.

Lord Newton 701
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 705
Lord Tweedmouth 707
The Earl of Rosebery 707
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 708
Lord Newton 709

SEA FISHERIES BILL.—The following Lords were named of the Select Committee—

M. Abercorn. (*D. Abercorn.*)
E. Onslow.
E. Yarborough.
L. Meldrum. (*M. Huntly.*)
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Northbourne.
L. Heneage.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman. 709

House of Lords Offices.—Select Committee appointed: the Lords following with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee—

D. Northumberland.
M. Cholmondeley.
M. Ripon.
M. Breadalbane.
E. Clarendon. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Chesterfield.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Spencer.
E. Mount Edgcumbe.
E. Belmore.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. de Montalt.
E. Cranbrook.
E. Ancaster.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
V. Peel.
V. Knutsford.
V. Churchill.
L. Windsor.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Rosebery. (*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Welby.
L. Burghclere.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Bexhill Water and Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time .. 711

Private Bill Petitions [Lords] (Standing Orders not complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following

Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Marylebone Chapels (St. James, Westmoreland Street). Ordered, That the report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 711

Rotherham Corporation Bill.—Torquay Tramways Bill. Read a second time, and committed 711

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [22nd February], " That the Committee of Selection do nominate a Committee, not exceeding eleven Members, to be called the Police and Sanitary Committee, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the provisions of the general Law."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

Question again proposed.

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 711
Mr. Halsey (*Hertfordshire, Watford*) 711

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 150 and 173A apply to all such Bills.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Four be the quorum of the Committee.

Ordered, That if the Committee shall report to the Committee of Selection that any clauses of any Bill referred to them (other than clauses containing police and sanitary regulations) are such, as having regard to the terms of reference, it is not in their opinion necessary or advisable for them to deal with, the Committee of Selection shall thereupon refer the Bill to a Select Committee, who shall consider those clauses and so much of the Preamble of the Bill as relates thereto, and shall determine the expenditure (if any) to be authorised in respect of the parts of the Bill referred to them. That the Committee shall deal with the remaining clauses of such Bill, and so much of the Preamble as relates thereto, and shall determine the period and mode of repayment of any money authorised by the Select Committee to be borrowed and shall report the whole Bill to the House, stating in their report what parts of the Bill have been considered by each Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to sit as two Committees, and in that event to apportion the Bills referred to the Committee between the two Committees, each of which shall have the full powers of, and be subject to the instructions which apply to, the undivided Committee, and that Three be the quorum of each of the two Committees.—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

PETITIONS.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES IN IRELAND.—Petition from Newry, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 713

JURORS' EXPENSES BILL.—Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table 713

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LICENCE HOLDERS.—Petition from Newport (Isle of Wight), for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 713

LICENCE (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Whitchurch; Barnstaple; Ilfracombe (three); Altrincham; Sheffield; Bolton; Millom; Burnley; Cleckheaton; Kingston on Thames; Llannor; Ashton in Mersey; Moreton in Marsh; Shipton Oliffe; Rochdale; Cefny Bedd; Halkyn; Seven Sisters; Trealaw; Luton; Ffestiniog; Mountsorrel; Brockley; Rusholme; Partick; Pye Bank; Bromley; York, Aberdovery; Tottenham; Oxford; Chorley; Westminster; Llanarmon; Ruthin (three); Colwyn Bay; Abergele; Llangollen; Stepney; Oldham; Paisley; Penrhyndendraeth; Salford; Builth; Yngs; Pennal; Talgarth (two); Gwynfa; Llanon; Brynhiwgaled; Bala; Maida Vale; Hackleton; Huby; Dewsbury; Manchester; Gwyddgrug; an Kidwelly; to lie upon the Table 713

TAXATION OF FEU DUTIES.—Petition from Kilmarnock, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 713

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POOR PRISONERS' DEFENCE ACT, 1903.—Paper [presented 11th February] to be printed. [No. 71.] 713

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.—Copy presented of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 72.] 714

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland in substitution for Rule 28 of 1st May, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 714

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.—Copy presented, of Memorandum summarising the Regulations in force in foreign countries with regard to British Commercial Travellers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 714

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROGRESS MADE WITH PIER AT AULTBEA.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 714

PROSECUTIONS FOR ILLEGAL TRAWLING.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 714

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 715

NEW EQUIVALENT GRANT FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth (Caithness-shire); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 715

AUDITING OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 715

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION VOTE—AMOUNT OF FEES FROM CANDIDATES.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 716

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Board of Trade Vote—Branch for Irish Affairs.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 716

Customs Certificates for Treacle used for Feeding Stuffs.—Question, Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 717

Sylviculture in Scotland.—Question, Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 717

Delays in Delivery of Scotch Mails.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth; Answer, Lord Stanley 718

Resignations in the Postal Service.—Question, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Lord Stanley 718

Unexpended Parliamentary Grants for Devonshire Schools.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Sir William Anson .. 719

Erection of Statue of Queen Victoria in Westminster Hall.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Lord Balcarres 719

Ringworm Hospital for Poor Law Children.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 720

Vaccination Act—Interpretation of Section 2.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 721

Phœnix Park, Dublin—Treasury Contribution to Rates.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 721

Delay in Delivery of Eggs from Claremorris, County Mayo.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 722

Rent Disputes on Wetherell Estate, County Longford.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 722

Promotion of Irish National School Assistant Teachers.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 723

Case of Late Private Norris.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 723

Compensation for Injury to Gunner William Murphy.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 723

Estate of the Late James M'Gowan.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 724

White British Born Labour in the Transvaal.—Question, Mr. Platt-Higgins (Salford, N.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 725

Employment of Convicts in South African Mines.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 725

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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

New Service Rifle.—Question, Mr. Osmond Williams (Merionethshire); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 725

Devonport Dockyard Blacksmiths.—Question, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 726

Royal Naval Reserve Station at Ullapool.—Questions, Mr. Leveson-Gower (Sutherland) and Mr. Bignold (Wicks Burghs); Answers, Mr. Pretyman .. 726

Swaziland.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 727

British Colonies and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 728

British Indian Subjects and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.—Questions, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.) and Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 728

Central African Labour for the Transvaal Mines.—Question, Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 729

East Africa and Uganda Currency.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) and Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answers, Earl Percy 729

Brussels Sugar Convention—Permanent Commission.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Earl Percy 730

Superannuation in the Post Office Telephone Service.—Question; Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester); Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 731

Municipal Contracts with Foreign Firms.—Question, Mr. Crooks; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central) .. 732

Motor Cars Committee.—Question, Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 732

Land Purchase in County Kilkenny Mount Loftus Estate.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 733

Tubbercurry Police Hut.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 733

Irish Magistrates and the Irish Language.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 734

KERRY RAILWAY AND HARBOUR GUARANTEES.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 734

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 3, 4, 5, and 5A be struck out of the Bill :—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That in the case of the Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Earl of Harewood' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways (Railways), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."
First two resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table. 735

SELECTION (STANDING) COMMITTEES.

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection ; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee ; Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Baird, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Beckett, Mr. Boland, Mr. Griffith Boscawen, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Cawley, Sir Charles Cayzer, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Jesse Collings, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crombie, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr, Doogan, Sir J. Fortescue Flannery, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Garfit, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir James Joicey, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Bonar Law, Sir Elliott Lees, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Long, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Charles McArthur, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. William McKillop, Sir William Mather, Mr. William Maxwell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. O'Mara, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Pike Pease, Colonel Pilkington, Sir James Rankin, Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Round, Mr. Runciman, Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir John Barrington Simeon, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Whitley Thomson, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Tully, Sir William Walrond, Mr. George Whiteley, Colonel Williams, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Young.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee ; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee ; The Lord Advocate, Mr. Agg-Gardner, Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Atkinson, Mr, Barran, Sir George Bartley, Mr. Boland, Mr. Butcher, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Coghill, Mr. Colston, Mr. Cripps, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. George Faber, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Flynn, Sir Frederick Godson, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Henry David Green, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Harwood, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. James Heath.

Mr. Helder, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jordan, Sir Lees Knowles, Mr. William F. Lawrence, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Legge, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Loder, Mr. Loyd, Mr. Macdona, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. William Moore, Mr. Arthur Morton, Captain Norton, Sir Francis Sharpe Powell, Colonel Pryce Jones, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Soames, Mr. Soares, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Benjamin Stone, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Ure, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Robert Wallace, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee of Selection: That, in pursuance of the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following additional Member to act as a Commissioner: Mr. Charles Douglas.

Reports to lie upon the Table 736

NEW BILL.

Municipal Corporations Bill.—"To amend the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," presented by Mr. Cripps; supported by Sir George Bartley; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 94.] 738

Business of the House (Reports of Money Committees).—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committee of Ways and Means, and Committees authorising the expenditure of Public Money other than the Committee of Supply may be entered upon at any hour after midnight, though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order Sittings of the House."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*)

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 738
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 739
Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 739

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Pretyman.*)

Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 740
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's*) 740
Mr. Gibson Bowles 740

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and negatived.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.]

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NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

1. £1,270,000 (Supplementary), in respect of the following Navy Services, viz. :—

	£
Vote 8, Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, etc.—	
Section I. Personnel - - - - - - - -	53,200
Section III. Contract work - - - - - - -	1,254,800
	£1,308,000
Section II. Matériel— Deduct Appropriations in Aid - - - - - -	38,000
	£1,270,000

Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 741
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 744
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 748
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 754
Mr. Ritchie (*Croydon*) 758
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 758
The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge*) .. 759
Sir Edward Reed (*Cardiff*) 764
Mr. Reginald Lucas (*Portsmouth*) 766
Mr. Runciman (*Dewsbury*) 767
Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) 769
Mr. Gibson Bowles 771
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 772
Colonel Denny (*Kilmarnock Burghs*) 773
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 774
Mr. Pretyman 775
Mr. Runciman 776
Mr. Wolff (*Belfast, E.*) 777
Mr. Crean (*Cork, S.E.*) 777

Vote agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz. :—

	£
Vote 1. Pay, &c., of the Army - - - - - -	2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts - - - - -	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies - - -	2,030,000
Total - - - - -	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations in Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) -	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 779

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head F (C), Pay, &c., of the Corps of Imperial Yeomanry (South Africa), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 782
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 783
The Secretary of State for India (*Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford*) .. 784
Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Boroughs*) 785
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (*Mr. Bromley-Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield*) 786
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 787
Sir Edgar Vincent (*Exeter*) 788
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) .. 788
Mr. Gibson Bowles 789
Mr. George Whiteley (*Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 790
Mr. Arnold-Forster 791

Mr. SECRETARY ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put."

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 190 ; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 10.)

Question put accordingly, " That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head F (C), Pay, etc., of the Corps of Imperial Yeomanry (South Africa), be reduced by £100."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 122 ; Noes, 190. (Division List No. 11.)

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill (BY ORDER).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Disraeli (*Cheshire, Altrincham*) 799
Mr. Rothschild (*Buckinghamshire, Aylesbury*) 801

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out the word ' now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words ' upon this day six months.' "—(*Mr. Disraeli.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping.) .. 801
Mr. Lawson Walton (Leeds, S.) .. 801
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) .. 802
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) .. 802
Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London) .. 803
The Chairman of Committees (Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith) .. 803
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) .. 803
Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) .. 803
Mr. Hudson (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) .. 804
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) .. 804
Mr. Harold Reckitt (Lincolnshire, Brigg) .. 804

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 24 ; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 12.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed.

IRISH RAILWAY RATES.

Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork) .. 807
Mr. Power (Waterford) .. 812

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, excessive Railway Rates and defective transit facilities generally constitute a serious bar to the material advancement of Ireland, and should receive immediate attention from the Government."—(*Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien.*)

Mr. Flynn (Cork. N.) .. 815
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) .. 817
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) .. 829
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) .. 830

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 87 ; Noes, 121. (Division List No. 13.)

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill.—Read the third time, and passed .. 831

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Surrey Commercial Dock Bill. Read a second time, and committed .. 833

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed .. 833

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill (BY ORDER). Read a second time and committed .. 833

PETITIONS.

Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill.—Petition from Lewisham, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 833

Licence Holders.—Petition from Scarborough, for redress of grievances ; to lie upon the Table 833

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law ; from Llwynhendy ; Wrexham ; Stockport ; Lincoln (two) ; Tovil ; Keynsham ; East Kent ; Stanningley ; Brynsiencyn ; Cilfren ; Maesteg ; Esgairnant ; Betchworth ; South Norwood ; Law ; Croydon ; Guildford ; Newbridge ; Leicester ; Lampeter ; Gartmore ; Llanhilleth ; Gaediffaith ; Engedi and Rhiw ; Foubridge ; Newcastle ; Leeds ; Newcastle Emlyn ; Monkwearmouth ; Southall ; and Accrington ; to lie upon the Table 833

London Government Act, 1899.—Petition from Islington, for alteration of Law ; to lie upon the Table 833

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against ; from Penryn, and Tunbridge Wells ; to lie upon the Table 833

Municipal Corporation Bill.——Petition from Abergavenny, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 834

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Army Estimates, 1904–5.—Copy presented, of Army Estimates of Effective and Non-Effective Services for the year ending 31st March, 1905 [by Command] referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 73] 834

Army (Ordinance Factories, 1904–5).—Copy presented, of the sum required for the year ending 31st March, 1905, to defray the expense of the Ordnance Factories [by Command] ; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 74] 834

Army (Memorandum on Estimates).—Copy presented, of Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates of 1904–5 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 834

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.—Copy presented, of Report by thd Board of Trada rsepecting the Motherwell and Bellshill Railway (Abandonment) Order, and the objects thereof [by Aet] ; to lie upon the Table 834

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3122 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table .. 834

South African Mines (Mortality).—Address for "Return of the numbers and rate of mortality from (*a*) accident, (*b*) other causes, among (1) the white miners, artisans, and labourers employed in the Rand Mines ; (2) all classes of natives in the Rand Mines ; (3) the British Central African natives in the Rand Mines ; (4) the natives in the Rhodesian Mines ; and (5) the natives in the De Beers' Mines, Kimberley, during the last twelve months for which statistics are obtainable."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*) 834

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Poor Law Superannuation (Ireland) Bill.—" To provide for Superannuation Allowances to certain local officers and servants in Ireland, for contributions towards such allowances by such officers and servants, and to make other relative provisions," presented by Mr. O'Malley ; supported by Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Condon, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Clancy, Mr. McGovern, and Mr. Lundon ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 95] 835

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Upkeep of London and Dublin Stationery Offices.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) ; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 835

Income and Expenditure of Patent Office.—Question, Mr. Field ; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 836

Average Amount of Admiralty Vote—Average Expenditure of Same in Ireland.—Question, Mr. Field ; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 836

Civil Service Pensions—Temporary Service.—Question, Mr. Thornton (Clapham) ; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 837

Increase of Salary for Chief Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.) ; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 837

Amount of Corn Duty repaid last Year.—Question, Mr. J. A. Pease (Essex, Saffron Walden) ; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 837

English Whisky sold as Irish or Scotch.—Question, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.) Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 838

Absence of County Court Judges—Payment of Deputies.—Question, Mr. Marshall Hall (Lancashire, Southport) ; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 838

Effects of Maritime War on Shipping and Commercial Transactions.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 838

Value of British and Irish Exports to North American Colonies.—Question, Sir Frederick Milner, (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw) ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 840

Education (Scotland) Bill—Date of Introduction.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee) ; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 841

Mayor of Londonderry—Residential Qualification.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.) ; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 841

Purchase of O'Grady Estate.—Question, Mr. J. P Farrell (Longford, N.) ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 841

Flooding of the River Riffey, County Longford.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 842

Marine Works at Cape Clear.—Question, Mr. Gilhooly (Cork Co., W., Answer, Mr. Wyndham 842

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SALE OF IRISH SOCIETY'S ESTATE.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 843

COST OF EXTRA POLICE IN CASTLEBAR AND WEXFORD.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 843

INCREASED BARRACK ACCOMMODATION AT BERMUDA.—Question, Sir Frederick Milner; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 843

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY RAILWAYS.—Questions, Mr. Ainsworth (Argyll); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) .. 844

SOUTH AFRICAN MINES—MORTALITY STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 846

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE—HOURS OF WORK.—Questions, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 846

TRANSIT REGULATIONS FOR CHINESE LABOURERS.—Questions; Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 847

"PROTECTOR" OF THE CHINESE.—Question, Mr. Charles Allen (Gloucestershire, Stroud); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 848

MACEDONIAN GENDARMERIE.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 848

THE "MANDJUR."—Question, Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answer, Earl Percy 848

METROPOLITAN POLICE MAGISTRACY.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 848

TUBERCULOSIS—MILK VENDING REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Chapman (Cheshire, Hyde); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 849

GIPSY ENCAMPMENTS—MODEL BYE-LAWS.—Question, Lieut.-Colonel Tufnell (Essex, S.E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 849

IRISH COASTGUARDS—ILLEGAL TRAWLING.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham) 850

IRISH MILITARY CANTEENS—SALE TO CIVILIANS.—Questions, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid) and Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster 851

PETTIGO PETTY SESSIONAL BENCH.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 851

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IRISH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—Questions, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr) and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. Wyndham .. 852

IRISH EVICTED TENANTS.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.) and Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Wyndham 853

IRISH BUTTER.—Questions, Mr. Joyce (Limerick), Mr. Flynn (Cork Co., N.) and Mr. Flavin; Answers, Mr. Wyndham 853

IRISH POLICE AND FREEMASONRY.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 854

HEAD CONSTABLE MOORE, R.I.C.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 855

POLICE CONSTABLE WALSH OF ROSTREVOR.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 855

LOCAL TAXATION.—WEEKLY TENEMENTS.—Questions, Mr. Sheehan; Answers, Mr. Wyndham 856

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,300, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces."

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 857

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,200, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 858
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 858
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) 858
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 859
Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 860
Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside) 860
Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick) 861
Lord Balcarres 862
Mr, William Redmond (Clare, E.) 863
Mr. Gibson Bowles 864
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 865
Colonel Pilkington (Lancashire, Newton) 865

Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) rose in his place and claimed to move that the Question be now put.

Question "That the Question be now put," and agreed to.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 124 ; Noes, 161. (Division List No. 14.)

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH claimed that the original Question be now put.

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 170 ; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 15.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a supplementary sum not exceeding £18,800 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) .. 873
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) .. 873
Mr. Courtney Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) .. 875
Mr. Coghill (Stoke-upon-Trent) .. 875
Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross) .. 876
Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) .. 876

Motion made, and Question, "That a sum not exceeding £13,800 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. O'Mara.*)

Mr. Malcolm .. 877
Mr. Humphreys-Owen (Montgomeryshire) .. 877
Mr. Gibson Bowles .. 878
Mr. John Burns .. 879
Lord Balcarres .. 879
Mr. Courtney Warner .. 882
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) .. 883
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) .. 883
Lord Balcarres .. 883

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum not exceeding £31,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Stationery, Printing, and Binding for the Public Service to pay the expenses of the Stationery Office, and the Cost of Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

Mr. Whitley .. 884

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £30,000 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Whitley*

Mr. Malcolm .. 886
Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth) .. 887
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) .. 887
Mr. Gibson Bowles .. 889
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) .. 890
Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.) .. 891
Sir Arthur Hayter (Walsall) .. 891
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Brightside) .. 892
Mr. Corrie Grant (Warwickshire, Rugby) .. 892
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) .. 893
Mr. Goddard (Ipswich) .. 893
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) .. 894
Mr. Courtney Warner .. 896
Mr. Dalziel .. 896
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) .. 897

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Labouchere .. 897

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Class III.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum not exceeding £2,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st of day March, 1904, for certain Miscellaneous Legal Expenses."

Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) .. 898
The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) .. 899
Mr. Swift MacNeill .. 899

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum not exceeding £1,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Mr. Labouchere .. 900
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) .. 900
Sir Robert Finlay .. 901
Mr. Swift MacNeill .. 902

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 126 ; Noes, 214. (Division List No. 16.)

Class IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a supplementary sum not exceeding £29,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (*Kerry, W.*) 905
Mr. Boland (*Kerry. S.*) 906
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 907
Mr. William Redmond. 909
Mr. Lundon (*Limerick, E.*) 909

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

Technical Education (Ireland) (Equivalent Grant).

Mr. Sheehy (*Meath, S.*) 910
Mr. Joyce (*Limerick*) 912

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the action of the Treasury in withholding the Irish Equivalent Grant for Technical Education is a violation of the intention of Parliament and a gross injustice to Ireland."—(*Mr. Sheehy.*) .. .. ..

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 915
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.*) 919
Sir Thomas Esmonde (*Wexford, N.*) 921
Sir James Haslett (*Belfast, N.*) 924
Mr. Crean (*Cork, S.E.*) 925
Mr. Wolff (*Belfast, E.*) 927
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 928

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 80; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 17.)

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 25th FEBRUARY, 1904.

NEW PEER.

William Henry Armstrong Fitzpatrick Watson-Armstrong, Esquire, having been created Baron Armstrong of Bamburgh and Cragside, in the county of Northumberland, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Lord Tennyson took the Oath 937

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Newcastle and Gateshead Water [H.L.]; North Wales Electric Power [H.L.]; Ticehurst and District Water and Gas [H.L.].

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And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Clyde Navigation (Works); Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Docks). The same were ordered to lie on the Table .. 937

Standing Orders Committee. Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Rotherham Corporation Bill (Petition for Bill) ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill, on condition that the consent of the Local Authority to the construction of Tramway No. 4 be proved before the Committee on the Bill, and the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 5. and 6 to be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill (Petition for Bill), the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 6, 8, 8A, 8B, and 8C be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London United Tramways Bill (Petition for Bill) ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 3, 4, 5, and 5A be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and Bill llowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to 937

York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill. [H.L.].—The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Order made on Friday last discharged and Bill committed 938

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill; Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. To be read 3ª to-morrow 938

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form a Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.:—

D. Bedford (Chairman),
E. Carnwath,
E. Harrowby,
E. Verulam,
V. Colville of Culross;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday the 8th of March next at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 938

Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Gosport Water

Bill [H.L.]; Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.:—

E. Stamford,
E. Crewe (Chairman),
L. Carew,
L. Romilly,
L. Hylton;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday the 8th of March next at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill 938

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (GENERAL).—Papers relating to the proposed adoption of a metric system of weights and measures for use within the Empire 939

TRADE REPORTS.—

I. Annual Series—No. 3122. Trade of Alexandria for the year 1902.

II. Miscellaneous Series—No. 602. Germany: The Textile Technical Schools and the Development of the Textile Industries 939

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).—

1. Reports on manuscripts in various collections: Vol. III. The manuscripts of T. B. Clarke-Thornhill, Sir T. Barrett-Lennard, Bart., Pelham R. Papillon, W. Cleverley Alexander.

2. Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P., preserved at Kilkenny Castle: New Series. Vol. III. 939

ARMY (ESTIMATES).—Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates for 1904–1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie upon the Table 939

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairmen of the Standing Committee:—

E. Spencer,
E. Morley,
E. Camperdown,
V. Cross,
L. Balfour,
L. Elgin (*E. Elgin and Kincardine*),
L. Burghclere.

Read, and ordered to lie upon the Table. 939

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Viscount Cross Chairman of the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie upon the Table 940

NEW BILL.

Prevention of Corruption Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for the better prevention of corruption; was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 15.] 940

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill.—Brought from the Commons read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 16.] 940

Newcastle Chapter (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order). Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next 940

THE WAR AND THE BRITISH NAVY.—

Earl Spencer 940
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*) 941
The Earl of Rosebery 943
The Earl of Selborne 944

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
Lord Ribblesdale 944

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to Order) and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
Lord Ribblesdale 945

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to order) and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

CROWN AGENTS.—

The Earl of Portsmouth 946
The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 949
Earl Grey 954
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 957

Adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock till To-morrow half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—

London and India Docks Company Bill; London and North Western Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 961

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Private Bills (No Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Applicable).—Mr. Speaker had laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz. :—

Saddleworth and Springhead Trawways (Abandonment) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 961

London United Tramways Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901) Limited, for constructing tramways, and widening and altering roads, and acquiring lands, in the counties of Middlesex, Bucks, Surrey, and London; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 961

Reading Corporation Bill.—Order [9th February], that the Reading Corporation Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 962

PETITIONS.

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Llandilo; Hay; Burn Cross; Batley; Hyson Green; Aberkenfig; Hanley; Eastney; St. Helens; Hackney (two); West Somerset; Cadoxton Barry; Dinas; Taunton; Hyde; Barry Dock; Penarth; Morganstown; Llantrisant; Ilford; Eccles; Rhosdn; Bermondsey; Huttoft; Orrell; Llangadfan; Bedfordshire; Stockport; Nottingham; Warminster; Newport; Canterbury; Longridge; Rillington; Overton; Clitheroe; Northamptonshire; and Shepherd's Bush; to lie upon the Table 962

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Lewisham, against; to lie upon the Table 962

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy presented, of Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P., preserved at Kilkenny Castle, New Series, Vol. III. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 962

Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy presented, of Report on Manuscripts in Various Collections, Vol. III. The Manuscripts of T. B. Clarke-Thornhill, esquire, Sir T. Barrett Lennard, Baronet, Pelham R. Papillon, esquire, and W. Cleverley Alexander, esquire [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 962

Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 602 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 962

Civil Service and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1904–5.—Copy presented, of Estimates for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending 31st March, 1905, together with a Copy of the Memorandum by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury relating thereto [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 75.] 964

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PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—

1. Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Durham). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 76.]

2. Inquiry into Charities (Sunderland County Borough). Return relative thereto [ordered 9th February; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 77.] 964

VOLUNTEER BATTERIES (QUICK-FIRING GUNS).—Address for "Return showing the names of the Volunteer Batteries which have been supplied with 4·7 Quick-firing Guns."—(*Colonel Pilkington.*) 964

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DUBLIN POST OFFICE—LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Lord Stanley 1003

ARMAGH POST OFFICE—STAFF ARRANGEMENTS.—Question, Mr. John Campbell; Answer, Lord Stanley 1003

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GREAT BRITAIN AND SPAIN.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1007

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1007

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1007

NEW BILLS.

False Statements (Companies) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to False Statements with respect to the financial position of companies or other bodies," presented by Mr. Attorney-General; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General, the Lord Advocate, and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday, 7th March, and to be printed. [Bill 96.] 1008

Foreign Marriages Bill.—"To amend the Law with respect to Marriages between British Subjects and Foreigners," presented by Mr. Macdona; supported by Mr. Talbot, Mr. Rothschild, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Winston Churchill, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Samuel Evans, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Stuart Samuel, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, and Lord Edmund Talbot; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 97.] 1008

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz.:—

Vote 1. Pay, etc., of the Army	£2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies	2,030,000
Total	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10)	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1009

Motion made and Question proposed, "That item, Vote 1, Sub-head H., (Gratuities to the Troops for Active Service), be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

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Sir A. Hayter (Walsall) 1010
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1011
Sir A. Hayter 1012
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1012
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1013
Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) 1014
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1014
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 1015
Mr. Whitley 1016
Mr. Courtney Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 1017
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) 1018
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 1019
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) 1020
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1021

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 127 ; Noes, 184. (Division List No. 18.)

Original Question again proposed.
Mr. Buchanan 1025

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head K (Pay, Wages, etc., of Army Service Corps, Subordinate Establishments), be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Mr. Bromley Davenport 1026
Mr. Whitley 1027

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed

Mr. Buchanan 1028

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head AA (Pay, etc., of the China Expeditionary Force), be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Mr. Arnold-Forster 1030

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 136 ; Noes, 187. (Division List No. 19.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) 1031

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head BB (Pay, etc., of the Somaliland Expeditionary Force), be reduced by £100." —(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

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Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 1035
Mr. Courtney Warner .. 1036
Mr. Sydney Buxton .. 1037
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) .. 1037
Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 1038
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) .. 1039
Mr. Gibson Bowles .. 1039
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) .. 1040
Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.) .. 1041
Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire) .. 1042
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) .. 1042
Mr. Ritchie (Croydon) .. 1044
Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 1046
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) .. 1047
Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) .. 1048
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) .. 1049

Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, That the Question be now put.

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 204 ; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 20.)

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 138 ; Noes, 208. (Division List No. 21.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) .. 1059
Mr. William Redmond .. 1061

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head B (Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad), be reduced by £100,000." —(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Mr. Bromley Davenport .. 1063
Mr. Sydney Buxton .. 1063
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) .. 1063

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Supply.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Army (Supplementary) Estimates, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army Services, viz. :—

Vote 1. Pay, &c., of the Army	£2,000,000
Vote 6, Transport and Remounts	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other supplies	2,030,000
Total	6,130,000
Excess Appropriations in Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10)	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head B (Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad), be reduced by £10,000."—[*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Mr. Bromley Davenport 1064

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 74; Noes, 88. (Division List No. 22.)

Mr. Flynn (*Cork N.*) 1065

Motion made and Question proposed "That Item Vote 6, Sub-head C (Sea Transport), be reduced by £10,000.—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Mr. Austin Taylor (*Liverpool, E., Toxteth*) 1067
Mr. Bromley Davenport 1068

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 85 ; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 23.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Flynn 1069

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head E (China Expeditionary Force, Transport and Remounts), be reduced by £10,000."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Mr. O'Mara 1071

Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.) moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," but the Chairman, being of opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

Question again proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Subhead E (China Expeditionary Force, Transport and Remounts), be reduced by £10,000."

Mr. Charles Devlin 1072

Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster rose in his place, and claimed to move, "
"That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 137 ; Noes, 98. (Division List No. 24.)

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 104 ; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 25.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Charles Hobhouse 1077
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 1079
Mr. Bromley Davenport 1080
Mr. Charles Hobhouse 1081

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head F (Somaliland Expeditionary Force, Transport and Remounts), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Mr. Bromley Davenport 1081
Mr. Flynn 1082
Mr. William Redmond 1082
Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 1084

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 120 ; Noes, 169. (Division List No. 26)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Buchanan 1087

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head B B (South Africa, Expenditure in connection with Imperial Military Railways), be reduced by £5,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Sir Edgar Vincent (*Exeter*) 1089
Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 1090
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 1090
Sir M. Hicks Beach (*Bristol, W.*) 1095
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1096
Mr. Whitley 1096
Mr. O'Mara 1097

Mr. Secretary AKERS DOUGLAS rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 170 ; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 27.)

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 113 ; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 28).

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Mr. Secretary AKERS DOUGLAS claimed, "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz :—

Vote 1. Pay, etc., of the Army - - - - - -	£2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts - - - - - -	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies - - -	2,030,000
Total - - - - -	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) -	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 169 ; Noes, 109. (Division List No. 29.)

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

VAGRANT CHILDREN'S PROTECTION.—Bill to provide for the further protection of the Children of Vagrants, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Spear, Mr. Bond, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Moon, Mr. Yerburgh, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Crooks, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, and Mr. Bousfield.

Vagrants' Bill.—"To provide for the further protection of the Children of Vagrants," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 98.] 1107

Adjourned at twenty-eight Minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Mid-Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Clyde Valley Electrical Power Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1109

Newcastle and Gateshead Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1109

Llanelly Harbour Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1109

Ticehurst and District Water and Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed 1109

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl Fitzwilliam be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Verulam; read, and agreed to 1109

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed 1109

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CROFTER COLONISATION.—Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a scheme of colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of crofters and cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland; with appendices 1109

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.—Fifty-sixth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England; with an appendix 1109

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT THE NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES COMPANY'S FACTORY, UPTON TOWANS, CORNWALL.—Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the precipitating and final washing houses of the factory of the National Explosives Company, Limited, at Upton Towans, Hayle, Cornwall, on the 5th January, 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1110

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.—The Electoral Act, No. XXXV., of 1904. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1110

NEW BILL.

Site for Duke of York's School Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for extinguishing certain rights of way over certain lands situate in the parish of Guston, in the County of Kent—Was presented by the Lord Windsor; read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. [No. 17] 1110

THE MISSION TO TIBET.

Lord Reay 1110

Moved "that an humble address be presented to His Majesty for further Papers relating to Tibet."—(*The Lord Reay.*)

The Under Secretary of State for India (*The Earl of Hardwicke*) 1122
The Marquess of Ripon 1131
The Earl of Rosebery 1138
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1144

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

GRIEVANCES OF RESERVE OFFICERS.

Lord Rosmead 1151
The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 1151

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1152

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

Felixstowe Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1152

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill; Whitby Gas Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1152

Southend Water Bill—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time 1153

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill—Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1153

PETITIONS.

BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLLING).—Petitions from Deptford, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1153

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law: from Blaenau Festiniog; Llanfrothen; Trawsfynydd; Cambridge; Kentish Town; Ilfracombe; Sheepbridge; Collyhurst; Leigh; Neath; Bwlchgwyn; Stockton-upon-Tees; Bury; Selly Oak; Bournbrook; Halesowen; Worcester; Everton; Putney; Dunstable; Compstall; Blænwenen; Blackwood; New Tredegar; Nantyglo; Abertillery; Maesteg; Peckham; Rhymney; Liverpool; Southgate; Shrewsbury; Middleton; Llanelly; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table 1153

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Gloucester, against; to lie upon the Table 1153

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table 1153

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIONS (NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES COMPANY'S FACTORY, UPTON TOWANS, CORNWALL).—Copy presented, of Report by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the

Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion of nitroglycerine which occurred in the precipitating and final washing houses of the factory of the National Explosives Company, Limited, at Upton Towans, Hayle, Cornwall, on the 5th January, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1153

Ecclesiastical Commission.—Copy presented, of Fifty-sixth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1154

Western Australia.—Copy presented, of the Electoral Act, No. XXXV., of 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1154

Crofter and Cottar Colonisation Scheme.—Copy presented, of Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a scheme of colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of crofters and cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1154

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Naval Gun Sights.—Question, Mr. Harmsworth (Caithness-shire); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1154

Workmen's Compensation—Amendment of Law.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1155

Extension of Workmen's Compensation Act.—Question, Sit Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1155

Estate of the late Thomas Flynne.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Earl Percy 1155

Exports of Coal into France.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1155

Produce of Coal Export Duty.—Question, Mr. Runciman; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1156

Coal Export Duty.—Question, Mr. Runciman; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1156

Dogs Bill.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 1156

Musical Copyright Bill—[Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Mount (Berkshire, Newbury) 1156
Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 1162
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) 1181
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) 1187
The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 1190

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc."—(*Mr. Mount.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words " Trade, etc." and insert the words " Law, etc."—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Galloway 1194
Mr. Cohen (*Islington, E.*) 1194
Mr. Cochrane 1195
Sir Francis Powell (*Wigan*) 1195

Question put, and negatived.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Osmond Williams (*Merionethshire*) 1195

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. John Wilson (*Durham, Mid*) 1197
Colonel Pilkington (*Lancashire, Newton*) 1203

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put ; " but MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 14th April.

NEW BILL.

TOWN AND COUNTY COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND).—Bill to enable women to be elected and act as members of Town and County Councils in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Baird, Colonel Denny, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Ure.

Town and County Councils Qualification of Women) (Scotland) Bill.—" To enable women to be elected and act as members of Town and County Councils in Scotland," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 99.] Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next .. 1204

HOUSE OF LORDS, MONDAY, 29TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1205

Liverpool and Wigan Churches Bill [H.L]; Maidenhead Bridge Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill [H.L.]; St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.]; St. Mary Woolnoth Bill [H.L.]—Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 1205

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR.—Abstract of the Annual General Account for the year ended 26th July, 1903. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1205

NEW BILL.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1894, and to provide for the punishment of incest. Was presented by the Lord Alverstone; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 18) 1205

Weights and Measures Metric System Bill [H.L.].—The following Lords were named of the Select Committee:—

L. Belhaven and Stenton.
L. Colchester,
L. Wolverton,
L. Kelvin,
L. Farrer.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman 1205

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MONDAY, 29TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 62 AND 66 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders Nos. 62 and 66 have been complied with, viz.:—Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill 1206

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Brymbo Water Bill; Great Central and Midland Joint Railways Bill; Great Central Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Steam Vessels Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill; Sheppy Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1206

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PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 67 has not been complied with, viz. :—Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1206

Bexhill Water and Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill; Midland Railway Bill; Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1206

Arlesey Gas Bill.—Order [4th February], that the Arlesey Gas Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, read, and discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell*) 1206

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law: from Sheffield; Fenton; Egerton; Belfast; Southport; (two); Garston; Uxbridge; Ardwick; Houghton; Handsworth; St. Asaph; Flint; Newmarket; Uckfield; Bradford; East Ham; Bath; Lampeter; Birmingham; Halesowen; Ormskirk; Barking; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table .. 1207

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Tenbury, against; to lie upon the Table 1207

RATING OF CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.—Petition from Liverpool, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1207

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Thatcham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1207

BRITISH MUSEUM.—Petition of the Trustees of the British Museum (King's Recommendation signified), for grant in aid; referred to the Committee of Supply 1207

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.—Paper [presented 26th February] to be printed. [No. 77.] 1207

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158B]; referred to the Committee on the Bill 1207

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS).—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade of their Proceedings under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and The General Pier and Harbour Act (1861) Amendment Act, Session 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 78.] 1207

WAR OFFICE (RE-CONSTITUTION) COMMITTEE.—Copy presented, of Report of the War Office (Re-constitution) Committee, Part II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1208

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Charitable Endowments (London). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. Francis Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 79.]

2. Bridlington Piers and Harbour. Copy of Abstract of the General Annual Account for the year ending 26th July, 1903 [by Act]. 1208

WINES IMPORTED.—Return ordered, "showing the quantity of wines at the various degrees of strength which were imported into the United Kingdom in 1903 from Spain, Portugal, Madeira, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Australasia, and other countries (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 100, of Session 1903)."—(*Sir Thomas Dewar.*) .. 1208

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

VACCINATION EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES—CASE OF MR. BICKHAM.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1209

INCIDENCE OF IMPORT DUTIES IN DENMARK AND THE ARGENTINE.—Question, Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1209

IMPORTS OF FOREIGN GOODS INTO CANADA.—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1209

IMPORTS OF LINEN YARNS FROM FRANCE AND BELGIUM.—Question, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1210

PORT OF LONDON BILL.—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1211

AFFORESTATION IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1211

BOOTS FOR POST OFFICE MESSENGERS—IRISH TENDERS.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Lord Stanley 1211

POSTMASTERSHIP OF CHIRK.—Question, Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck); Answer, Lord Stanley 1212

COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OCCASIONED BY INCORRECTLY TRANSMITTED TELEGRAMS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Lord Stanley 1213

FORESTRY IN SCOTLAND—STATE AID.—Question, Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 1213

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1214

NAVAL EXPENDITURE OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1214

REVENUE DERIVED FROM EXPORT DUTY ON PATENT FUEL.—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain .. 1215

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SHANKHAIWAN FORT.—Question, Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercrombie); Answer, Earl Percy 1216

MEDICAL OFFICERS AND MILK SUPPLY.—Question, Mr. Sharpe (Kensington, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1216

ACTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY IN COUNTY COURTS.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1217

TENDERS FOR COAL SUPPLIES AT ENNISCORTHY.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1217

LOCAL TRAFFIC IN COUNTY WEXFORD.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1217

ROMAN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT POLICE AT BALLYNAHINCH.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1217

BELFAST CORPORATION GAS ACCOUNTS AUDIT.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1218

RELIGION OF BELFAST PRISON OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1218

ACTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY IN IRISH COUNTY COURTS.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1219

PURCHASE OF THE ESTATE OF THE LATE CAPTAIN ANNESLEY.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell (Mayo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1219

ALLEGED PERJURY AT BALLINROBE PETTY SESSIONS.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1220

PROMOTION IN THE ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY.—Question, Mr. Hare (Norfolk, S.W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1220

SUMS VOTED FOR SOMALILAND EXPEDITION.—Question, Mr. John Ellis; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1221

PUBLICATION OF ARMY ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1221

HUTS AND CANTONMENTS SENT TO SOUTH AFRICA—PLACES OF ORIGIN.—Question, Mr. Duncan (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1221

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1222

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "PRINCE OF WALES"—DEFECTIVE ARMOUR PLATES.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1222

NEW WAR SHIPS' ARMAMENTS.—Question, The Master of Elibank (Edinburgh, Midlothian); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1223

NAVAL WORKS ACT EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1223

WAR OFFICE RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE.—Questions, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1223

IRISH MILITARY TAILORS.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1224

ASSAM EXCISE ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1225

INDIAN ARMY—MAJOR-GENERALS' COMMANDS.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1225

INDIAN COOLIES—TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1225

CANADA AND PREFERENTIAL TARIFFS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1226

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) and Mr. Ashton (Bedfordshire, Luton); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1226

PRICES OF STORES FOR CHINESE COOLIES.—Question, Mr. Ashton; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1227

TRANSVAAL MINES—SUNDAY REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Ashton; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1227

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND CHINESE AND JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS.—Questions, Mr. Charles Devlin and Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1228

CANADA AND CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1228

QUEBEC AND IRISH HOME RULE.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1228

SOUTH AFRICA—FREE GRANTS OF LAND TO SOLDIER SETTLERS.—Question, Mr. Duncan (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1229

CROWN AGENTS.—Question, Mr. Ashton; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1229

LAND CONCESSION IN EAST AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1230

BELLIGERENTS IN NEUTRAL PORTS.—Question, Captain Ellice (St. Andrews Burghs); Answer, Earl Percy 1230

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION—PERMANENT BUREAU.—Questions, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Earl Percy .. 1231

Alleged Seizure of British Colliers by Russia.—Question, Mr. Rose (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket); Answer, Earl Percy 1231

Central African Natives and the Transvaal Mines.—Question, Sir John Gorst; Answer, Earl Percy 1232

Command of the Macedonian Gendarmerie.—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Earl Percy 1232

Current Year's Revenue.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1233

Royal Commission on our Coal Supplies.—Question, Sir George Newnes (Swansea Town); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1233

Produce of the Coal Tax.—Question, Sir George Newnes; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1233

Adulteration of Whisky in Bond.—Questions, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1234

Street Traffic—Regulations as to Covered Vans.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1234

Prison Treatment of Passive Resisters.—Question, Mr. George White (Norfolk, N.W.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1235

Sale of Poisons—Southwark Inquest.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1235

Sugar Surtax.—Question, Mr. Kearley; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds Central) 1236

British Merchant Crews Desertions at San Francisco.—Question, Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1236

The Irish Land Act.—Questions, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), and Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1237

Unexpended Balances of Irish Votes.—Questions, Mr. Lough; Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1239

Irish Local Government Board Officials.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1240

Irish Resident Magistrates—Major Gosselin.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1240

Irish Labourers Bill.—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1241

Cooscroum (Kerry Improvement Works).—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1241

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Dublin Natural History Museum.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1241

Land Purchase in King's County—Doolan's Case.—Question, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1242

Constable Walsh of Rostrevor.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1242

Head Constable Moore, Royal Irish Constabulary.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh and Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1244

Land Purchase in Galway.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer Mr. Wyndham 1245

Railway Rates from Galway to Dublin.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1245

Ballinrobe Petty Sessions—Licensing Prosecutions.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell (Mayo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1245

Insurance of Fishing Boats.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1246

Evicted Tenants in County Cork.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1246

Street Preaching in Cork.—Questions, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Flavin, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.), and Mr. Crean (Cork, S.E.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1247

Fair Rent Cases in County Roscommon.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1249

Railway Facilities in County Limerick.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1249

Roxboro' Road School, Limerick.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1249

Irish Tourist Services.—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Wyndham .. 1249

Knockavilla Catholics and the Police.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1250

Tulla Labourers' Cottages Scheme.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1250

Arklow Harbour.–Question, Mr. Cogan (Wicklow, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1250

Galway Rates.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1251

Dublin Post Office.—Question. Mr. Nannetti; Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton).. 1251

Cork Telegraph Staff.—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Lord Stanley 1252

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster and Mr. Akers Dougas 1253

EDITING QUESTIONS.
Mr. Swift MacNeill 1254
Mr. Speaker 1255
Mr. Nannetti 1256

NEW BILLS.

Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Married Women's Property Act, 1882," presented by Mr. Kimber; supported by Sir George Bartley, Mr. Eugene Wason, and Mr. Lowe; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 100.]

Pharmacy Bill.—"To provide for the further regulation of the sale of poisons, and the compounding of medical prescriptions, and to amend the Pharmacy Acts, 1852, and 1868," presented by Mr. Lough; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 101.]

Parliamentary Voters and Elections Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and registration of Parliamentary Voters and to Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes in relation thereto," presented by Mr. John Sinclair; supported by Mr. Ashton, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Kearley, and Mr. Ure; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th July, and to be printed. [Bill 102]

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).—Order for Committee read.

The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge*) .. 1257

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. SPEAKER do now leave the Chair."

Mr. Herbert Roberts (*Denbighshire, W.*) 1274
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 1280

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word, 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'in view of the heavy burdens placed upon the people of the country by this increasing expenditure, and in the interests of international peace, the House is of opinion that His Majesty's Government should enter into communication with the great Naval Powers in order to ascertain whether they will be prepared to diminish their programmes of shipbuilding, and to adjust upon some permanent basis their relative naval strength.' "—(*Mr. Herbert Roberts.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) .. 1287
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 1292
Mr. Harris (*Tynemouth*) 1294
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) 1298

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Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth) 1302
Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) 1303
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1305
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1309

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 174 ; Noes, 122. (Division List No. 30.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Supply (Navy Estimates).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [29th February], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside) 1315
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1318
Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley) 1322
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1326
Mr. Reginald Lucas 1330
Mr. Power (Waterford, E.) 1333
Mr. Pretyman 1334
Mr. O'Mara 1339
Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire) 1342
Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) 1343
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) 1343
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 1344
Mr. William Redmond 1345

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 144 ; Noes, 70. (Division List No. 31.)

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Navy Estimates, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 131,100 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, including 20,656 Royal Marines."

Committee report Progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

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NEW BILL.

COAL MINES (WEIGHING OF MINERALS).—Bill to amend the provisions of The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, which relate to the Weighing of Minerals, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Haldane, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Ure, and Mr. Fenwick.

Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals) Bill.—"To amend the provisions of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, which relate to the Weighing of Minerals," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 8th March, and to be printed. [Bill 103.] 1347

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 1st MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1349

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.—Further correspondence regarding the Transvaal labour question (in continuation of [Cd. 1899], February, 1904). 1349

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).—Militia Training Return for 1903. 1349

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Code of Regulations for Day Schools for 1904. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table. 1349

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS).—Report by the Board of Trade of their proceedings under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, Amendment Act. 1349

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899 (MOTHERWELL AND BELLSHILL RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) ORDER).—Report by the Board of Trade respecting the above Provisional Order and the objects thereof.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.. 1349

Newcastle Chapter (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1349

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 1st March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

King's Speech (Answer to Address).—The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address 1350

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 Complied With).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz. :—London Port and Docks Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1350

Private Bills (Standing Order 63 Complied With).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 has been complied with, viz. :—Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.. 1350

Southend Water Bill. Read the Third time, and passed 1350

Clyde Navigation (Works) Bill; London and India Docks Company Bill; London and North Western Railway Bill; Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment) Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1350

Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment Bill (by Order). Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1350

PETITIONS.

Beerhouses.—Petition from Newport (Monmouthshire), for alteration of Law to lie upon the Table 1351

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Kirkdale (two); Port Talbot; St. Albans; Darwen; Newport (Fife); Stoke Newington; High Green; Sheffield; Bexley Heath; Blyton cum Wharton; Keighley; Maybole and Crosshill; London; Billingshurst; Dewsbury; Ewell; Guildford; Earlsfield; Love Clough; Lespit Hall; Crawshawbooth; Leicester; Beafood; Brierfield; Briercliffe; Middlesbrough; Bath; Aylsham; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table 1351

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900.—Account presented, showing the Money issued from the Consolidated Fund, under the provisions of the Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900, and of the Expenditure; the Money expended and borrowed and the Securities created under the said Act, for the period ended the 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 80] 1351

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Education (Scotland) Code (1904).—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1904, with appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1351

Education (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Return showing the Expenditure from the Grant for Public Education in Scotland in the year 1903, with Statistics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1351

Education (Scotland) (General Report).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1351

Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art.—Copy presented, of Report by the Director on the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1352

Colonies (General).—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the proposed adoption of a Metric System of Weights and Measures for use within the Empire [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1352

Transvaal.—Copy presented, of Further Correspondence regarding the Transvaal Labour Question [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1352

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3123 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1352

Army (Militia Training Establishments.)—Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1352

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Carriage of Early Potatoes from Kerry.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1352

Cypher Telegrams from Macedonia.—Question, Mr. Charles Allan (Gloucestershire, Stroud); Answer, Earl Percy 1353

Landing of British Subjects in America.—Question, Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); Answer, Earl Percy 1353

The Pyx Chapel.—Question, Sir Benjamin Stone (Birmingham, E.); Answer, Lord Balcarres 1354

Expenditure under the Military and Navy Works Acts.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1354

The Budget.—Question, Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1354

Crystal Palace Gas Bill.—Question, Mr. Ritchie (Croydon); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1355

Closing of St. Nicholas' Schools, Whitehaven.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Sir William Anson 1355

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PROMOTION IN THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, GLASGOW.—Question, Mr. John Wilson (Glasgow, St. Rollox); Answer, Lord Stanley 1356

SERVICE AT QUEENSFERRY.—Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1356

ROMAN CATHOLIC PRAYERS AS LECTURES FOR TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1356

OFFICERS' FURNITURE.—Question, Major Jameson (Clare, W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1357

ARMY CONTRACTS FOR STABLE FITMENTS.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1358

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES—PAYMENT OF WAR COMPENSATION.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1358

CURRENT EXPENDITURE UNDER THE MILITARY WORKS ACT.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1359

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1359

CHINA AND THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1359

UNSKILLED WHITE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1360

INCOME TAX.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney), and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1360

AMERICAN MAIL DELAYS.—Questions, Sir John Leng (Dundee) and Mr. Flynn (Cork County, N.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1361

RAILWAY GOODS RATES IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1362

RAILWAY RATES FOR KERRY POTATOES.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1362

CARAGH LAKE ROAD, KERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1363

IRISH LAND ACT REPORT.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1363

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.—Questions, Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter), Mr. Gibson Bowles, and Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answers, The Prime Minister and 1st Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1363

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1367

WAR OFFICE REFORM.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; Answer, Mr. J. Balfour 1368

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen Members in respect of the Musical Copyright Bill:—Sir Frederick Banbury, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Grant, Mr. Hugh Law, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Moss, Mr. Mount, and Sir Gilbert Parker.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Charles James Stanley Howard, Esquire, commonly called Viscount Morpeth, for the Borough of Birmingham (South Division).

NEW BILLS.

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—"To enable women to be elected and act as members of County and Borough Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir. Richard Jebb, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Emmott, Captain Norton, Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Yerburgh, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Lough, and Mr. John Burns; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 104].

Vaccination Prosecutions Bill.—"To provide that no prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians" presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr, John Rolleston, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Broadhurst, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 105].

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 131,100 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, including 20,656 Royal Marines."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1369
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1373
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 1378
The Earl of Dalkeith (*Roxburgh*) 1385
Sir Lees Knowles (*Salford, W.*) 1388
Sir Edgar Vincent (*Exeter*) 1389

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Lord George Hamilton (Middlesex, Ealing) 1391
The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) .. 1394
Sir M. Hicks Beach (Bristol. W.) 1399
Sir Edward Grey (Northumberland, Berwick) 1404
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1408
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 1413
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) 1416
Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) 1417

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That 127,100 men and boys be employed for the said Services.—(*Mr. O'Mara.*)

Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 1418
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 1418
Mr. Pretyman 1419
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1420
Mr. O'Mara 1224
Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) 1425

Mr. PRETYMAN rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put."

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 224 ; Noes, 131. (Division List, No. 32.)

Question put accordingly, " That 127,100 men and boys be employed for the said Services."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 87 ; Noes, 247. (Division List, No. 33.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

MALICIOUS INJURIES (IRELAND).—

Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.) 1433
Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.) 1436

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That, in the opinion of this House, the time has come for a revision of the Law which enables compensation for malicious injuries to be levied in Ireland on particular districts, involving an unjust and iniquitous burden on innocent persons."—(*Mr. Boland.*)

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Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.) 1440
Mr. Joyce (Limerick) 1442
Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.) 1443
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 1445
Mr. Cullinan (Tipperary, S.) 1446
The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) .. 1446
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1455
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1459
Mr. Power (Waterford, E.) 1462

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 90 ; Noes, 153. (Division List No. 34.)

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill.—To be read a second time to-morrow .. 1465

Felixtowe Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1465

PETITIONS.

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law, from Wimbledon ; Mitcham ; Jump ; Kexbro ; Higher Broughton ; Forton ; Shipley (six) ; Mossley ; Northampton ; Aberdeen ; Leicester ; Scalford ; Mid Kent ; Failsworth ; Wiltshire ; Leintwardine ; Goodliegh ; St. Helens ; Gosport ; Bournemouth ; Uttoxeter ; Corsham ; Chippenham (two) ; Calne ; New Kent Road ; Bratton ; Bath ; Kettering ; Leeds (three) ; North Wilts ; Sibford ; Berwick-upon-Tweed ; Anniesland ; Dinmael ; Abergele ; Colwyn Bay (five) ; Eyam ; Preston Patrick ; Liverpool ; Rochester ; Capel Mawr ; Llangynhofal ; Waen ; Malton ; Bampton ; Parkgate ; Royal Leamington Spa ; and Salford ; to lie upon the Table 1465

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Education (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1903–4 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 1465

Education (Scotland) (General Reports).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1903 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 1465

Factory and Workshop Acts (Earthenware and China).—Copy presented, of Amended Special Rules for the Manufacture and Decoration of Earthenware and China, as established in certain Factories and Workshops, by the awards of the Arbitrator, Chester Jones, Esq., dated 19th March, 1902, and 18th February, 1904 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 1466

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VOLUNTEER BATTERIES (QUICK-FIRING GUNS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 25th February; *Colonel Pilkington*]; to lie upon the Table .. 1466

INDENTURED COOLIE LABOUR.—Address for "Return of Ordinances now in force in self-governing or Crown Colonies respecting the importation therein of Indentured Coolie Labour from India or elsewhere."—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*) 1466

RAILWAY, ETC., BILLS.—Copy ordered, "of Report by the Board of Trade upon all the Bills and Provisional Orders of Session 1904 relating to Railways, Canals, Tramways, Harbours and Tidal Waters, and the supply of Electricity, Gas and Water."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) 1466

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

INCOME TAX COLLECTION IN SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND.—Question, Mr. Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1466

POST OFFICE TELEPHONE DIRECTORY.—Question, Mr. H. C. Richards (Finsbury, E.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1466

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS AT DONARD, COUNTY WICKLOW.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1467

INCREASED POSTAL FACILITIES AT RAHEEN, MOUNTRATH, QUEEN'S COUNTY.—Question Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Lord Stanley .. 1468

POSTMASTERSHIP OF MOYNALTY, COUNTY MEATH.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell (Mayo, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1468

GOVERNMENT GRANT TO SCHOOL AT BROGHTON GIFFORD, WILTSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Sir William Anson 1468

CROSSING FROM WESTMINSTER ABBEY TO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Lord Balcarres 1469

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.—Question, Mr. Thornton (Clapham); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1469

APPOINTMENT OF NURSES FROM DUBLIN CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL TO WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1469

IRISH AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1470

RAILWAY SERVICE AT BALLINROBE.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1471

BALLINROBE AND CLAREMORRIS RAILWAY GUARANTEE.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1471

WARDERS IN TULLAMORE PRISON.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1472

PROMOTION OF IRISH ASSISTANT TEACHERS TO PRINCIPALSHIPS.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1473

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ARMY ENLISTMENTS—FALSE TEETH AND VARICOSE VEINS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1474

ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF PRIVATE MICHAEL SHARKEY.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1474

COST OF FOREIGN ARMIES.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1474

INDENTURED AND FREE CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton .. 1475

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

TREASURY EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1475

SUGAR IMPORTS FROM CUBA.—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1476

SUGAR CONSUMPTION ON THE CONTINENT.—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1476

CONFECTIONERY IMPORTS.—Questions, Mr. Horner (Lambeth, N.); Answers, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N. R., Thirsk) 1477

BRITISH AGRICULTURE—CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETIES.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1478

KERRY ROADS.—Questions, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.), and Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1479

HEAD CONSTABLE MOORE, ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1480

ANTRIM COUNTY COUNCIL.—Questions, Mr. Joseph Devlin and Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1480

GALBRAITH ESTATE.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham .. 1481

CAPTAIN MUSTERS' ESTATE, COUNTY LONGFORD.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1481

STATES BUTTER.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Wyndham .. 1482

ALLEGED PERJURY AT BALLINROBE PETTY SESSIONS.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell (Mayo, S.), and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1482

MAEROOM LABOURERS' COTTAGE SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1483

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RISH RAILWAY EMPLOYEES—PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1484

ELFAST CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1484

IRS. BRUCE PRYCE'S ESTATE, COUNTY KILDARE.—Question, Mr. Kilbride; (Kildare, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1484

OUTH AFRICAN WAR—DEATH ROLL.—Questions, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) and Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1485

OMALILAND EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1486

OUTH AFRICAN NATIVES AND CHINESE MINE LABOUR.—Question, Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1486

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE—SALE OF INTOXICANTS AND OPIUM TO CHINESE. —Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1486

LABOUR ORDINANCES—HOURS OF LABOUR AND PAY.—Questions, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) and Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1487

BRITISH INDIANS AND THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Major Seely; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1487

SUNDAY TRAINS ON IRISH RAILWAYS.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1488

CORK POST OFFICE—OVERTIME FOR AMERICAN MAILS.—Questions, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork) and Captain Donelan (Cork County, E.); Answers, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1488

MARINE INSURANCE BILL.—Question, Mr. Charles MacArthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1489

ALIEN IMMIGRATION BILL.—Question, Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1489

PARLIAMENT AND THE PRESS.—Questions, Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket), Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis), Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.), and Mr. Flynn (Cork County, N.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1491

IRISH BILLS.—Question, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1491

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THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION.—Question, Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1492

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the county of Dorset (Eastern Division), in the room of the hon. Humphry Napier Sturt, now Baron Alington, called up to the House of Peers.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 1492

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).—Sir JAMES FERGUSON reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure; and Sir Thomas Esmonde to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures.

Sir JAMES FERGUSON further reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had agreed to the following Resolution:—"That any member of the Chairmen's Panel be and he is hereby empowered to ask any other member of the Chairmen's Panel to take his place in case of necessity."

Reports to lie upon the Table 1492

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1493

NEW BILL.

Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) (No. 2), Bill.—"To amend The Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Gretton; supported by Mr. Butcher, Mr. Cameron, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Carne Rasch, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Soames; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 106.] 1493

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee:

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,691,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to Officers, Seamen and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Mr. William Redmond (Clare E.) 1494

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Wages, &c., of Officers, Seamen, and Boys) be reduced by £281,692."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1501
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 1503
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1504
Mr. Groves (Salford, S.) 1506
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) 1507

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Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 1510
The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) .. 1512
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1516
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1519
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) 1523
Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) 1524
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 1527
Mr. Black (Banffshire) 1528
Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter) 1530
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) 1531
Mr. Pretyman 1533

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 83 ; Noes, 284. (Division List No. 35.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. O'Mara 1541

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 273 ; Noes, 73. (Division List No. 36.)

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1545
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1554

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the decisions of the Permanent Commission of the Brussels Sugar Convention have operated so as to inflict grave injury on the manufacturers of sugared products in the United Kingdom as compared with their Foreign rivals, and that the Convention has failed to confer the anticipated benefits on the West Indies."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. David MacIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale) 1562
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) 1563
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1571
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1577
Mr. Walter Palmer (Salisbury) 1579
Mr. Tomkinson (Cheshire, Crewe) 1579

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 162 ; Noes, 202. (Division List No. 37.)

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 17*th February*, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Borough of Birmingham (South Division), in the room of the right hon. Joseph Powell Williams, deceased.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill; Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

THAMES STEAMBOAT TRUST BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he did not wish to prevent the Bill going upstairs to a Committee but he wished to enter a protest against the Bill on the ground that it contained a principle that would be prejudicial, not only to private enterprise but to municipal undertakings, if carried into effect. The Bill sought to incorporate, against its will, the London County Council as a party to this Trust, and for reasons which might subsequently develop he now entered his protest. Still he believed the common sense of a Committee of the House of Commons would put upon the measure the stamp of disapproval which it deserved.

Bill read a second time and committed.

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next (Evening Sitting).

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Read a second time; to be considered upon Friday.

Ryde Gas. Report [16th February] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

LICENCE HOLDERS IN THE CITY OF WINCHESTER.

Petition from Winchester, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Hastings; York; Sunderland; Brighton; Harringay (two); Blackpool (two); Ilkley; Garth; Skelmersdale; Gowerton; Gorseinon; Lewes; Sheffield (two); Stratford; Morriston; Charlestown; Bolton (three); Morecombe; Irleth; Lewisham; Broughton; Great Harwood; Haslington; Bellingham; Aintree; Broughty Ferry; Preston; Exeter (two); Bedminster Down; Lancaster and Chester; Ladywood; Bingley; Ladybank; Letham; Tayport; Bwlchgwyr; Salern; Stonebroom; Mumbles; Birstal; Clydach; Abergwynfin; Landore; Dalston; Crewe; Gomersal; Bodfari; Llansilin; Cerrigydmdior; Bryngwyn; Penrhyn (two); Llanbedr; Coupar Angus; Foston; South Wigston; Kirkby in Furness; Eccleshall; Chelmsford; Hemingfield; Capel Newydd; Newnham on Severn; Hereford; Llwyncelyn; Durham; Watch Tower; Penrhyn Dendraeth (two); Ffosyffin; Glasgow; Pennant; Bream; Penmorfa; Llwyndafydd; Brecon; Blaenafon; Rochdale (two); Blaecefn; Blaenplwyf; Llanfrandog; Tregaron; Blaencaron; and Trigwron; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN).

Petition of the College Hall Old Students' Association, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from Staffordshire, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES' ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS) (IRELAND).

Paper [presented 16th February] to be printed. [No. 59.]

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT COMMITTEE.

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the question of Musical Copyright, with separate Report by Mr. J. Caldwell, M.P., and Minutes of Evidence [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY WORKS ACTS, 1897, 1899, and 1901.

Account presented, for the period ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 60.]

NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES).

Annual Account presented, for the period ended 20th November, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 61.]

NATIONAL DEBT (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Account presented, of the Gross Amount of all Moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of the Fund for Military Savings Banks, from 19th September, 1845, to the 5th January, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 62.]

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

Accounts presented, for the year ended 21st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 63.]

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1903-4).

Copy presented, of Estimate of the Further Amount required during the year ending 31st March, 1904, beyond the sum already provided in the Grant for Navy Services for the year [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 64.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

Estimates presented, for the year 1904-5 with Explanation of Differences [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 65.]

NAVY (STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF ESTIMATES).

Copy presented, of Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1904-5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS).

Copy presented, of Report No. 26 (Nigeria, Report on a Series of Mineral and Vegetable Products from Northern Nigeria, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, Director of the Imperial Institute) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Soane's Museum.—Copy of Statement of the Funds of the Museum of the late Sir John Soane on 5th January, 1904 [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Prices of Sugar in London and on the Continent.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the retail prices of white granulated sugar per lb. in London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, on 1st January, 1902, and 1st January, 1903, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The retail prices of white granulated sugar, as sold in large retail establishments in London, Paris, and Berlin, on the 1st January, 1902 and 1903, were approximately as follows:—

	1st January, 1902. Per lb.	1st January, 1903. Per lb.
London - -	2d.	2d.
Paris - -	4d.	4d.
Berlin - - -	3d.	3 d.

I am informed that corresponding particulars cannot be given for Vienna as white granulated sugar is not consumed there.

British, American, and German Imports into Natal.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that British imports into Natal for the year 1903 show an increase of only 3·7 per cent., as compared with 1902, whereas the import of German goods shows an increase of 44·8, and American 42·7 per cent.; and can he state how these figures compare with the year 1892.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Board of Trade have not yet received official particulars of the trade of Natal with different countries in 1903. The official Returns of the United Kingdom show a decline of about 1 per cent. in exports of British produce from the United Kingdom to Natal in 1903 as compared with 1902.

Damage to Port of Ness Breakwater, Isle of Lewis.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the nature of the recommendations contained in the report relative to the damage sustained by the breakwater at Port of Ness, Island of Lewis; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.* Mr. Shiel's Report has already been circulated to the House, and the nature of any suggested remedies are therein set forth, but the expenditure involved in the repair to the breakwater and harbour of Portness, taken as a whole, is so large and out of proportion to the advantage to be gained, that it is not intended to take any further action in the matter.

Construction of Protecting Wall for Skigersta Pier, Isle of Lewis.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state whether any progress has yet been made with the construction of a protecting wall for the Skigersta Pier, Island of Lewis.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The Congested Districts Board are still without reply from the promoters, but I understand that they are, nevertheless, keeping the question of the grant open.

Applications for Postmastership of Ilfracombe.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the date and number of the Post Office Circular in which applications were invited for the postmastership of Ilfracombe; and whether he will state the number of applications for the position.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The vacancy was not notified in the Post Office Circular, as the late postmaster was for disciplinary reasons required to exchange with another officer.

Annual Leave of Adult Post Office Messengers.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that adult messengers in provincial towns who perform full night duty are not allowed the same annual leave as unestablished officers on full day duty; and whether he can see his way to increase the annual leave for the former.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not aware of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers, and if he will furnish me with some particulars I will have inquiry made.

Postal Deliveries at Bolarney, Wicklow.

Mr. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there are three or four deliveries daily of letters within the greater portion of the urban district of Wicklow, but that there is only one delivery daily at 6.30 a.m. in the part of the urban district called Bolarney, and that therefore letters arriving by the 7.20 a.m. train are not delivered until the following morning; and, if so, whether he will cause such steps to be taken as will ensure a morning delivery of all letters arriving the same morning to every resident within the urban district, and to those who reside adjacent to the urban boundary.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have made inquiry on the question of affording a second delivery in the day in Bolarney, but I regret to find that, owing to the small number of letters affected, I should not be justified in incurring the additional expense necessary for affording the desired accommodation.

Telephonic Communication between Ballymena and Londonderry.

Mr. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state what progress has been made towards establishing telephonic communication between Ballymena and Londonderry with branch lines to Coleraine and Limavady; and when the construction of such system will be commenced.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Post Office trunk wire system has been extended from Belfast to Ballymena, and exchanges have been opened at Antrim, Ballymena, and Kells. I hope to be able to arrange for a further extension to serve Coleraine, Limavady, and Londonderry, when additional funds are available for the development of the Post Office telephone system. A Bill to authorise further capital expenditure for this purpose will be presented to this House at an early date.

Russo-Japanese war—Coal as Contraband.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether coal has been declared by the Russian or Japanese Government to be contraband of war, or has coal been treated by the belligerents as contraband.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Government have not learned that any declaration on the subject has been made by either of the belligerents.

Collection of County Rates in Ireland.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Local Government Board for Ireland will agree to allow collectors of county rates to close their accounts, on 1st May and 1st November instead of on 31st March and 30th September, where it can be shown that the collection of the rates will be thereby facilitated.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I would refer the hon. Baronet to my reply to the similar Question put to me on Monday last by the hon. Member for South Wexford.†

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act—Suggested Amendment.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will introduce a Bill to amend the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893, as far as Ireland is concerned, so that the analyses of artificial manures be stamped on the bags, so much of nitrogen, potash, and phosphates, the use of all other terms to be prohibited; that it be compulsory on the merchant to sell to a policeman or officer authorised to take samples by the Department of Agriculture or county committees of agriculture and technical instruction; that samples be taken by a sampling pale or spear; and that, as regards feeding stuffs, merchants be obliged to give an analysis of the exact composition, and any departure therefrom to constitute an offence.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Department has under consideration the question of an amendment of this Act, so far as it applies to Ireland. Before finally deciding as to the nature of any amendment, it proposes to avail itself of the conclusions which may be arrived at by the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into the working of the Act in Great Britain, as much of the evidence given before that Committee will no doubt be also applicable to the circumstances of Ireland.

Working of Terenure to Blessington Steam Tramway.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Terenure (Dublin) to Blessington steam tram line has been working at a loss to the county Wicklow guaranteeing baronies of over £9,000, from the year 1887 to the 30th of June, 1901, equal to £600 a year; and also that the Blessington to Poulaphouca line, an independent and unguaranteed enterprise, is worked partly at the expense of the Terenure and Blessington system; and whether he will order an official inquiry into this matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The payment of dividends on the guaranteed capital of the Dublin and Blessington Steam Tramway and the payment of any deficit in working expenses on the line are guaranteed by the counties Dublin and Wicklow. The net payment by each county in the period covered by the Question was £4,596 7s. 11d. There were Treasury contributions amounting to £3,830 1s. 2d. in respect to each county during the same period. The extension to Poulaphouca is worked by the Dublin and Blessington Tramway at a lower rate and is allowed exceptional terms in the way of rebate on traffic. I am not aware that there are any reasons for an inquiry as suggested.

Irish Children and Gardening—Government Grants.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the English Board of Agriculture gives grants for the subject of gardening; and whether, in view of the desirability of children being made familiar with the habits, growth, and food of plants, he will take steps to secure that the Irish Board of Agriculture shall also give grants for the subject of gardening.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I understand the English Board of Agriculture makes grants to certain institutions for agricultural purposes, including gardening. Grants for the teaching of gardening have also been made by the Irish Department through the county committees of agricultural and technical instruction.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Training Ships—Stornoway's Claim.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the Walpole Commission in their Report, dated July, 1890, recommended the establishment of a training ship for the Royal Navy at Stornoway; and will he say whether the Board of Admiralty can see their way to adopt the proposal.

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† See (4) *Debates.*, cxxix, 1308.

The SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The Admiralty are aware of the recommendations of the Walpole Commission, but cannot see their way to establish a training ship at Stornoway.

North Sea Fisheries — Wireless Telegraphy with the Faroe Islands and Iceland.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the proposals contained in the Report of the International Conference on Scientific Investigations in the North Sea, the question of securing communication with the Faroe Islands and Iceland by wireless telegraphy has yet been considered.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): As my predecessor stated on the 25th of June last,† the point raised cannot be considered apart from the larger question of the general use of wireless telegraphy. On this subject no definite decision has yet been arrived at.

Thibet—Chinese Envoy to Lhassa.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state whether the Chinese Envoy who left Pekin in December, 1902, on a mission to Lhassa, for the purpose of arranging with the Thibetans a solution of the questions which the British Commissioner has been charged to discuss, has yet reached his destination; and, if not, will he consider the expediency of communicating with the Chinese Government with a view to ascertain the cause of the delay.

EARL PERCY: We have no information of the arrival of the Chinese Envoy at Lhassa, but, having regard to the instructions which the Chinese Minister stated in his note of 23rd November had been given, it is not proposed to make a furthur communication to the Chinese Government at present.

Armed Political Mission to Thibet.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state the grounds upon which the Government of India decided that the present armed political mission to Thibet is not a contravention of the Act of 1858; and whether he will lay Papers before Parliament containing a report of the proceedings of the Supreme Executive Council of India at which this conclusion was arrived at, together with the opinions then given upon the question.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The fact that an escort accompanies the political mission does not necessitate any action under Clauses 54 and 55 of the Government of India Act, to which I presume the hon. Member refers. The question is not one for the consideration of the Governor-General's Council, and there are no Papers to be presented.

Indian Railways.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Parliament will be supplied at an early date with copies of the Indian Government's recommendations, founded on Mr. Thomas Robertson's Report, regarding the working of the Indian railway system, with his suggestions as to new lines.

MR. BRODRICK: The views and recommendations of the Government of India on Mr. Thomas Robertson's Report are now under my consideration. I cannot present any further Papers at present.

Calcutta High Court.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, referring to the answer given by his predecessor to a Question by the hon. Member for the Frome Division of Somerset on the 13th November, 1902,† if he will state the result of the inquiry instituted.

MR. BRODRICK: I am informed by the Government of India that the suggestion that there has been any undue delay in the disposal of criminal work in the Calcutta High Court is entirely unfounded; that if the criminal work before the Court is found at any time to be more than one Bench can deal with, arrangements are always made for constituting a second criminal Bench to deal with the excess; and that the Judges, after careful search, are unable to trace that any case has occurred in which a person on a short term of imprisonment who has appealed and not been released on bail, has served his term before his appeal could be heard.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv., 554.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxiv., 868.

Convict Labour in the Colonies.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether convicts, native or otherwise, have ever been let out for hire in any of our self-governing or Crown colonies except in the case of the Transvaal.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): As I stated in reply to another Question on Monday,† 1,200 convicts are employed at Kimberley in the mines. This is in virtue of a contract between the Government and the De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited.

MR. EUGENE WASON: That is not an answer to my Question.

*MR. LYTTELTON: If the hon. Gentleman thinks it worth while pursuing the matter I will make further inquiries and endeavour to obtain the information he wants.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that convict labour is employed on Robben Island?

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Are there any white men among these 1,200 convicts?

[No answer was returned.]

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Government is prepared to alter the Ordinance with regard to the admission of Chinese labour so as to include the points suggested by the Chinese Minister for further safeguarding the interests of the immigrants, especially as regards corporal punishment.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Legislative Council of the Transvaal having been adjourned, the amendment of the Ordinance is not practicable, but I anticipate no difficulty in meeting the suggestions of the Chinese Minister under the power to make regulations which is given by the Ordinance.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Will the suggestion in regard to the appointment of a Consul or of Consuls be agreed to?

*MR. LYTTELTON assented.

Employment of Native Convicts in the Transvaal.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is the total number of native convicts in the Transvaal Colony; and how many are supplied for purposes of labour to private persons or companies. I beg also to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will state how many of the 850 native convicts supplied to the Transvaal gold mines have been convicted for minor offences, such as walking on the side-walk, intoxication, or petty thefts.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have given the hon. Member all the information in my possession, in replying to him on Monday,† excepting that I have also learnt that the employment of convicts with the mining companies was arranged, not to oblige them, but because there was insufficient accommodation in the gaols, with overcrowding and danger to health. I will make further inquiry as to the details which the hon. Member desires.

MR. WHITLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman ascertain the total number of convicts in the colony?

*MR. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix, 1320

† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix, 1320.

The Reported Rising in Nigeria.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): May I ask the Secretary for the Colonies whether he has any official information about the disasters in Southern Nigeria reported in this morning's paper?

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

Trinidad Disturbances.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he wil state when the Report of the Chief Justice of British Guiana, relative to the disturbances at Port of Spain, Trinidad, will be laid upon the Table of the House.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I cannot at present state whether the Report will be published or when.

MR. WEIR: May I repeat the Question in a week's time?

*MR. LYTTELTON: Oh, a little longer.

National Finance—Unexpended Balances.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, having regard to the fact that the unexpended balances of Votes surrendered to the Exchequer by Government Departments during the last ten years amounts to £11,613,119 19s. 9d., will he state how much of this sum represents Scottish and Irish Votes respectively.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I fear it is impossible to show the total surrenders out of monies provided for Scottish and Irish services because a great part of this provision is included in Votes such as those for the Post Office and Inland Revenue Departments which apply to the whole of the United Kingdom and which cannot, therefore, be earmarked to particular countries.

Supplementary Estimates.

MR. WHITLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of the Treasury whether there will be any Supplementary Estimates this year; and, if so, can he indicate the nature of the Votes required.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The Civil Service Supplementary Estimates were circulated yesterday. There will also be Supplementary Estimates for the Army and Navy.

MR. WHITLEY: Can the hon. Gentleman state the total amount to be asked for?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I am afraid not.

MR. WEIR: Can we have the amount for the Navy?

MR. PRETYMAN: £1,270,000. The Estimate will be circulated to-morrow.

Poor Prisoners' Defence Act.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask Mr. Solicitor-General whether he is aware that the Recorder, when dealing with the case of a prisoner brought before him at the Old Bailey on the 9th instant, stated that in his opinion the Poor Prisoners' Act did not clearly show that the prisoner was entitled to the services of both a solicitor and counsel, and, in the circumstances, he gave instructions for a counsel to be employed direct on behalf of the prisoner without reference to a solicitor; and, if so, will he state whether he proposes to take action in the matter.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CARSON, Dublin University): The Question does not accurately represent what was said by the Recorder on the occasion referred to. The Recorder stated that as no solicitors had, at the Old Bailey, expressed their willingness to defend poor prisoners under the Act of last session he was unable to assign a solicitor, but that he had come to the conclusion that he was entitled to assign counsel and he accordingly did so. The rules proposed by the Attorney-General in pursuance of the Act, and which have been laid upon the Table of the House, make provision for the employment of both solicitor and counsel.

Congestion in Scottish Crofting Counties.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, since the publication of the last Report of the Congested Districts Board, any arrangements for the acquisition of land in either of the six crofting counties for the creation of new holdings have been completed; and, if so, will he state briefly the nature of the arrangements, the districts where land has been secured, and the amount expended.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The only fully completed arrangement for the acquisition of land since the publication of the last Report of the Congested Districts Board is that of the Estate of Glendale in Skye, the price of which is not payable until Whitsunday term next, but there are several other cases which the Board hope to deal with in their forthcoming Report.

Fitzmaurice Estate—Queen's County.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what progress has been made with the sale to the tenants on the Fitzmaurice property in the Queen's county; and, whether any advance has been recently made in the way of sale on the other side of the same property to the tenants on the townlands of Coolnadoun and Clogheready in the county of Limerick.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The report made by the Land Commission on the Queen's county portion of this estate was before the Land Judge on the 14th ultimo, and its further consideration was postponed to an early date. It is not proposed, as I have already pointed out, to consider the question of a sale of the Limerick portion of the estate until after the completion of the sale of the Queen's County portion.

Apjohn Estate, County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say how the estate of the representatives of the late Michael Marshall Lloyd Apjohn in and around Pallasgrean, county Limerick, stands as regards sale to the tenants on it; and what progress has been made in that direction since last August.

MR. WYNDHAM: The draft rental has now been finally settled, and on Thursday last the Land Judge authorised the Receiver to negotiate with the tenants for the sale to them of their holdings.

Longford Drainage Rates.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any complaints as to excessive drainage rates in county Longford have been made to the Board of Works; whether he is aware that, in the case of the Camlin River Drainage tax, sums have been levied twice in one year on some tenants, and only once on others; whether any control rests in the hands of the local drainage board on the question of the assessing and levying of the amount; and to whom complaint is to be made in case of overcharges.

MR. WYNDHAM: No complaints of the nature mentioned in the first and second parts of the Question have been made to the Board of Works. The locally elected drainage board is responsible for the applotment and collection of the rates, and any complaints in this respect should be addressed to that board.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: If this matter is not attended to, will the Board of Works take it in hand?

MR. WYNDHAM: Any complaint of overcharge should go to the Board of Works. If wrongful administration is complained of, an action would be against members of the drainage board or the electors could turn them out at the next election.

Fair Rent Applications.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many applications to fix fair rents have been filed since 1st November, 1903; how many of these applications are first and how many second-term applications; and how many agreements have been filed during the same period.

MR. WYNDHAM: The number of applications filed between 1st November, 1903, and 15th February, instant, was, for a first-term rent, 1,070, and for a second-term rent, 1,869. The number of agreements filed in the same period was 741 for a first-term, and 1,113 for a second-term rent.

Harmless Lunatics in Ireland.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of introducing, this session, a Bill to assimilate the Law in Ireland with that of Scotland, which enables the boarding out of harmless lunatics.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I can only refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave on Thursday last to a Question put on the same subject.†

Irish Development Fund Act and National Schools.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the Development Fund Act, whether his undertaking given last session that all national schools, maintaining an average daily attendance of fifty pupils, will be entitled to the services of an assistant teacher will be carried into effect at an early date; and whether, in view of the fact that the Commissioners of National Education have frequently made representations to this effect, he will induce the Treasury to take steps to have this reform carried out with the least possible delay.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I promised to give this matter my earnest and favourable attention. But it must be considered in relation to all the features of primary education and to the charges, which cannot at present be determined, that may fall on the Development Grant in connection with the flotation of stock.

Mr. FLYNN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when he is likely to be in a position to give the Irish Members this information?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I shall be very glad to do it, either in this House or out of it, as soon as possible.

Tyrone Magistracy.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many Roman Catholic magistrates there are in the Fintona district, county Tyrone, seeing that the population is not largely Roman Catholic; and if any proposal will be made to the proper authority to increase the number of Roman Catholic magistrates.

Mr. WYNDHAM: One Roman Catholic magistrate attended Petty Sessions in this district last year. The Lord Chancellor and the Lieutenant of the County will consider any recommendations that may be made to them in favour of the appointment of additional Roman Catholic gentlemen to the Commission.

St. Mels College, Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state by what authority payment of a sum of £34 odd in respect of additional equipment expenditure for science teaching has been refused to St. Mels College, Longford; and, having regard to the fact that Part II. of the scheme of the County Longford Technical Committee provides for such payment, will he direct that the sanction of the department be given to its payment.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am advised that Part II. of the scheme does not provide for payment of the sum mentioned. The department has authorised payment of the whole of the amount allocated under the scheme for laboratory equipment at the college, namely £125. A further grant of £67 17s. 6d. out of the Science and Art Vote has also been made towards the cost of equipment, and an additional amount may be payable when the examination of the accounts has been completed.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: Are we to understand that the £34 is not covered by this further grant?

Mr. WYNDHAM: That is so I think.

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† See (4) Debates, cxxix, 1037.

Longford Rural District Loans.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why a sum of £130 certified for as being due as an instalment on loan to Longford Rural District Council by Mr. Price, Engineering Inspector of the Local Government Board, is not being paid; whether he is aware that in consequence of the delay in advancing this loan a cheque for £100, given to the contractor for the work, is lying unpaid at the bank since last October; and will he direct that the amount certified for by Mr. Price be now advanced.

MR. WYNDHAM: The inspector did not give a certificate, as stated. The amounts advanced from time to time in respect of approved loans are recommended by the Local Government Board. In the present case the Board recommended the issue of an advance of £150 to the District Council on the 5th instant, and on the 10th instant the amount was paid by the Board of Works.

Galway Fair Rent Appeals.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that appeals against decisions of Land Sub-Commission in fixing fair rents in county Galway, although lodged three years ago, have not yet been heard, he will take steps to secure that they shall be heard without further delay.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed that a sitting for the hearing of fair rent appeals at Galway will be arranged for by the Commissioners at the earliest possible date.

Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will arrange that notice plates shall be provided at the front counter of the post office at Belfast indicating the nature of the business transacted at the various departments, and direct that a late fee box be placed convenient to the general letter box.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I have given directions for enamelled iron notice plates to be fixed in the head post office at Belfast as desired by the hon. Member. A late fee letter box is already provided in Garfield Street beside the large letter boxes for general posting, and no further facilities for late fee posting seem to be necessary.

Longford Postal Arrangements.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in order to facilitate the earlier delivery of letters and parcels in Longford, he will direct that the auxiliary postmen at present employed for that purpose be placed upon the permanent staff of town letter carriers.

LORD STANLEY: There is no need at present to increase the number of established town postmen at Longford, but the question of employing an established rural postman in place of a rural auxiliary is now being considered.

Longford Drainage Loans.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to state the total amount of loans for drainage purposes raised in the county Longford; how much of this sum was administered by elected and how much by non-elected drainage boards; and how much is now outstanding against the several districts in North and South Longford.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The total amount of advances by the Board of Works for arterial drainage in county Longford is £51,652 1s. 1d. This is exclusive of the amount expended for maintenance by the local boards, as to which the Government has no information. All the trustees of drainage boards are elected. The amount of principal outstanding on the 31st March last was as follows:—Currygrane, £246 10s.; Upper Inny, £44,304 0s. 10d.; Rinn and Black River, £689 0s. 9d.; Total £45,239 11s. 7d.

Lough Foyle Lights.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any further progress has been made by the Irish Light Commissioners with the erection of the gas lighted sounding buoy, promised by him on their behalf in 1902, at the Tuns Bank entrance to Lough Foyle; and, if not, what is the cause of the delay.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that they hope to place the buoy on Tuns Bank during the coming summer. Some slight delay has been caused by a strike at the contractors' works, which has now been settled.

Transit of Irish Live Stock—Through Consignment Notes.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will make inquiry into the terms of the through consignment notes for the transit of live stock from Ireland to Great Britain; and whether he is aware that consignors are compelled to sign a contract relieving the carrying companies from the safeguarding provisions of the Carrier's Act.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot add anything to replies which I have from time to time given the hon. Member. I am not aware that carrying companies in Ireland compel or have any power to compel consignors of live stock to sign contracts relieving the companies of liability, and a general inquiry into the terms of consignment notes does not appear to be necessary.

Irish Soldiers as Game-beaters.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state with what object and by what authority the permanent staff of the Fifth Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, were engaged as game-beaters at Finnebrogue on 17th November and 19th January, and at Seaforde on 8th December and 5th January; and whether any, and if so what, remuneration was paid.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I am not aware of these incidents, and I am not prepared to interfere with the discretion of the local military authorities in the matter.

Buncrana Barracks, Donegal.

MR. O'DOHERTY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the cause of the delay on the part of the War Office in proceeding with the erection of the new military barracks at Buncrana, county Donegal; whether a site has yet been selected; and, seeing that the account prepared by the War Office for the years 1901–1902 provided for the erection of the barracks, will he say whether the construction will be proceeded with immediately.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As the hon. Member is aware, great difficulties have been experienced in negotiating for the purchase of land for building the barracks there for the Royal Garrison Artillery. The cost of the land together with the cost of the barracks is considered prohibitive, and the scheme of building the barracks has been accordingly abandoned.

Gambling in Futures.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the urgency of the situation arising from the corner in cotton, and introduce legislation to prohibit gambling in futures, options, and warrants in produce and stock exchanges, or give facilities for the discussion of a Bill with this object if introduced by a private Member.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's)—(for Mr. A. J. Balfour): I am afraid the situation—undoubtedly a most anxious one—will hardly be amended by legislation of the character suggested by the hon. Members; and though I heartily sympathise with the object the hon. Member has in view, I fear that, as at present advised, my reply to his Question must be in the negative. I may remind him that, after all, as is stated in the gracious Speech from the Throne, the best remedy for the condition of things from which, unfortunately, the cotton industry is now suffering would appear to lie in increasing the sources of supply of the raw material from the various parts of the Empire.

MR. FIELD: What is to become of the Lancashire and Yorkshire manufacturers in the meantime?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: That is a question I am afraid I cannot answer now.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

NEW BILLS.

RESIDENT MAGISTRATES (BELFAST) BILL.

"To make provision for the appointment and remuneration of Resident Magistrates in Belfast," presented by Sir James Haslett; supported by Mr. Wolff, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, and Mr. O'Doherty; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 70.]

WINTER ASSIZES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To extend the jurisdiction of Winter Assizes in Ireland," presented by Sir James Haslett; supported by Mr. Wolff, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. Thomas Corbett, Mr. O'Doherty, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 71.]

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

"For the registration of firms and persons carrying on business under trade names," presented by Mr. Emmott; supported by Mr. James Heath, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Holland, and Mr. Walter Palmer; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 72.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL.

"To provide for the adjustment, in accordance with changes of boundary effected under The London Government Act, 1899, of the areas within which local authorities and companies are authorised to supply electricity," presented by Mr. Gerald Balfour; supported by Mr. Bonar Law; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 69.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to Crofters' Holdings in Scotland," presented by Mr. Ainsworth; supported by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Weir, and Mr. Harmsworth; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 73.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the provisions of The Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, as to the application of the fund constituted by the Act; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Ainsworth; supported by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Weir, and Mr. Harmsworth; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 74.]

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To provide for the Taxation for local purposes of Land Values in burghs in Scotland," presented by Mr. Caldwell; supported by Mr. J. H. Whitley, Mr. Hunter Craig, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. John Hope, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. Dobbie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 75.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[TWELFTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [16th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said there were two features of the preceding day's debate which must be prominent in all their minds. The first was the lucid and masterly speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, whose knowledge and whose judgment on this particularly thorny question not only showed him thoroughly qualified for the important position which he now held, but also in an ordinary case would have rendered further justification of the Government attitude unnecessary. That led him to the second prominent feature, that this debate was differentiated from an ordinary case by the fact that in the very able speeches of the mover and seconder of the Amendment absolutely no consideration at all was given to the voice of the majority of the Legislative Council in the Transvaal, neither was any allowed for the Majority Report of the Labour Commission, or for the overwhelming evidence of experts whose lives had been given up to the study of labour questions such as these. The case of the mine-owners had been dismissed with a shrug of the shoulders, although they occupied the position of trustees of thousands of shareholders in this country—the sole suggestion was that they feared financial loss, and that all they desired was to flog work out of a voteless and subservient race. The official members of the Council were disposed of as placemen and the rest of the majority were discounted—unworthily, as he thought—as being "open to influence" and as "tame Boers"—a rather strange term to apply, for instance, to P. Roux, who was one of the last to surrender in the war. Thus, by a process of what he might call violent elimination, the hon. Member built up the superstructure of his own and succeeding arguments on the evidence of two individuals, the only men he assumed to be of fearless and independent character, and the only experts whom he considered worth consideration. Under these circumstances it seemed almost necessary to preface one's remarks by saying that those who supported the Government in this matter were not necessarily associates, accomplices, and hirelings of those traders in the Transvaal whom hon. Members opposite were never tired of denouncing. The insinuation, at any rate, would lie lightly on him, for he never owned stock or share in any gold or other mine. The hon. Member for Cleveland had expressed a hope that they should give a free vote on this occasion. Now, whatever he might have done the night before last, he certainly would be giving a free vote that night; because he proposed to give a vote in favour of the best interests of a colony for which, however unwillingly, they had taken the sole responsibility, and whose prosperity therefore it was their bounden duty to try to raise even above the level it enjoyed before the war. A new explanation of the war had lately been discovered. They were now being told that the war of 1899 was waged in order that an unlimited number of white men might find employment in the Transvaal, and it was added that the projected importation of Asiatic labour would mean that all the advantages gained by the expenditure of blood and treasure in the war was to be wasted. That was a new explanation of the war, which had not been discovered at the time when Gentlemen opposite were exercising all their ingenuity to find unworthy reasons for war in the Transvaal. It was ridiculous as a motive, for they held that the war was waged because the South African Republic did not acknowledge the suzerainty of Great Britain, because of the indignities inflicted upon British subjects in the Transvaal, and because of the invasion of a British colony by a Boer army.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): What about the Jameson Raid?

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member had better abstain from speaking on the causes of the war.

*MR. MALCOLM said he was only dealing with the explanation given by hon. Members opposite as to the cause of the war, but, of course, he would not press the matter further. He thought that if, as a result of victory, the Transvaal had become a happier land to live in, that was no reason for urging a procedure on the Transvaal Government of to-day which must logically lead to a monopoly of labour for Europeans in the mines. That was an impossible ideal in the first place, and in the second place it would be fraught with danger to the ultimate prosperity of the colony, and would very likely add much to the friction caused by the black labour problem which was already causing grave anxiety in various countries. Perhaps one might be allowed to protest against the interference of outside opinion in a matter which only concerned the Transvaal Government and the Imperial Government. He thought the remonstrance of Mr. Deakin, and of that impetuous Imperialist, Mr. Seddon—a new friend of hon. Gentlemen opposite—

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): No, an old friend.

*MR. MALCOLM said he thought these remonstrances were strangely out of place in the mouths of men who themselves would most violently resent outside interference in the affairs of their own colonies, and they must seem equally strange to the ears of those who held that local self-government was the keystone of our colonial success. Why was it that the Transvaal Government was so anxious to secure foreign labour? The reason was that they were desirous—as we all wished—to restore prosperity to the one industry which could pay the way of the colony—the one industry which caused money to circulate in the country and would allow British citizens to lead a happier life than they were likely to do under present circumstances. Gold was to the Transvaal what the cane fields used to be to the West Indies, what cod fishing was to Newfoundland, and what tea was to Ceylon. The development of that particular industry meant the development of the colony; its stagnation meant ruin to the colony. Could one be surprised that this was an urgent question to be settled, as he thought, without the *referendum* and without delay; for so long as development was delayed so long would the general welfare of the country be retarded, and so long, incidentally, would its share of the war debt to this country remain unpaid. It was lack of labour alone which prevented progress towards immediate prosperity.

The problem was now to supply that labour. Had they exhausted as yet every other source of supply? They would all admit that the Transvaal Government, since the war, had spent large sums of money in improving and developing recruiting methods, and at the same time they had to regret that its efforts had proved unavailing and unsuccessful. The latest returns showed that in spite of all their expenditure 129,000 men were wanted to bring the mines up to the state of efficiency they were in just before the war. Since 1886 there never had been sufficient Kaffir labour. Before the war they had 100,000 Kaffirs; now there were not more than 50,000, and the rest of these, after allowing for those employed on public works and in agriculture, were little better than wastrels scattered over the land. In this connection he hoped the House would allow him to accentuate what seemed to him likely to prove a great danger—and that was the number of unemployed Kaffirs unwilling to work and unbroken to discipline. As the number of these loafers increased they would become more and more a serious menace to the safety of the white minority. And their number would increase as labour-saving machinery was imported into the Rand, unless serious efforts were made to alter the conditions of native labour as they at present existed, to deal with the taxation and to modify those native habits which led to absolute sloth and worthlessness among the Kaffirs early in life. Their ancestors were only huntsmen and spearmen, but as they learnt the dignity of labour, and as their wants and the wants of their wives increased, they would be attracted to that form of labour the remuneration of which would most quickly satisfy their ambitions. The day had not yet come, but the process was going on slowly, and it would be pessimistic indeed to think it would not come. In Bechuanaland and Basutoland especially the change in the last twenty-five years had been extraordinary. But until that day dawned it would be for the good of all to insist on indirect compulsory labour, under, of course, humane conditions, for races in a backward state of civilisation. It was as necessary morally for black races to be made to work as for white children to be made to go to school. It was their first lesson in discipline, and to argue that there was anything of slavery in such a system was to misread or ignore the history of countries ruled and developed by white minorities and to show ourselves indeed slaves of our own misleading phraseology. In the Transvaal he believed 50,000 more men were immediately wanted. Where in Africa could they be found? Central Africa had been tried, but there were many difficulties and objections in the way, one of which was that natives who lived in the tropical zones of British Central Africa soon succumbed to the severe cold which often reigned in the Transvaal. East Africa, too, had been tried, but here again they tried to recruit from tribes of warriors and spearmen who would not labour for any wage. Some might be procured from British India, but it was difficult to get them at anything like possible prices, as the demand already exceeded the supply. The coolie experiment had already been tried in Natal, with the result that the Indian coolie had overrun the place, and had established himself by superior adaptability and more diligent habits of life as master in all the small trades of that colony, and there was no evidence to show that his importation would satisfy those who now declaimed against Chinese labour. They were left then with two sources from which to draw labour for the mines and so to send the river of prosperity flowing through the Rand. It could be got from white sources or from yellow. Anybody who had had anything to do with black labour knew there were certain forms of labour of an unskilled manual kind which the native expected and was expected to do. There were other branches of the same industry —higher branches of skilled labour, overseeing and administration, which were the peculiar province of the white man. The natives appreciated it, for nowhere was class or caste feeling developed as it was amongst native races, who were most particular to accept only that employment which their social *status* would allow them to perform; and it was realised also by the white men, from experience of the influence of the white men over black on the mines. But there was a corresponding obligation on the white class that those in authority should as far as possible be drawn from the best classes of the white race. These men could not descend to work beside the Kaffir in the mines. Not only would it lower them in the estimation of the natives and of their neighbours, but it would be impossible to give them the wages they would ask. White labour had been tried by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick in his Eckstein mines. Before he tried it he was a most ardent supporter of white labour—he was the only one of his partners who advocated it. But he had to give it up, and so indeed did the directors of a mine managed by Mr. Creswell. They only stopped when they found they were losing £3,000 a month by it.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): It is all a question of money then.

*MR. MALCOLM said the Government also tried it in railway construction; the work done by 1,000 navvies sent out from England cost four times as much as similar labour done by Kaffirs, and they saved £40,000 by giving them a month's wages and shipping them back to England. If then they could not get the best class of whites they were driven to the only other white market—experience had already shown that there was none between—and that was to the low class of Hungarians, Swedes, Norwegians, and Italians, whose moral tone imported to the Rand would be deplorable in its effect upon the Kaffirs. It would, he thought, be nothing less than a scandal to any Government, to suggest the importation of low whites. Native races were accustomed to look on the white race as the race of masters and they would not be long in inferring the decay of the white man's power when they found white servants like themselves, with a lack of moral backbone and self-reliance to which they were unaccustomed in a white man. He could only say modestly that his experience of black countries which were ruled by a white minority was that the consensus of reflecting opinion asked for "the best type of pale faces or none at all." Hence the United States, Canada, Ceylon, Singapore and Borneo, Australia, and New Zealand had gone to China to get the unskilled labourers that they wanted. We had at the present day this advantage, which the people of these countries and colonies had not—we had the benefit of their experience, and of knowing that precautions would be taken by our orders which were not taken in these countries in bygone years; and he was glad to say that by the regulations of the Colonial Secretary it would be found possible to take these advantages from them. There was absolutely no idea of supplanting the Kaffir or the white race by the Chinese, it was only to supplement the labour of the former. He ventured to think that that must be the view of the mine-owners, because the recruiting of a Kaffir cost £4 and of a Chinaman in China £8, and the more Kaffirs that would work, the fewer Chinese would be wanted. Therefore it was all to the advantage of the mine-owners that they should be able to recruit as cheaply as possible. His hon. friend the Member for Cleveland said that the Chinaman was hated wherever he went. He did not admit that at all, although he admitted that in many countries it was said that he was hated. That, however, was contrary to fact. He could not forget that the Western States of America would not have been what they were but for Chinamen; and in Singapore and Borneo the Chinese had very good characters as workmen. He believed that most people objected to whites doing unskilled labour with Kaffirs. If increased skilled labour was wanted the one thing that would get it was to increase the amount of unskilled labour. That had been proved beyond all controversy, and if the unskilled labour could be got from China a great deal of labour would be secured for the skilled white man. The Chinaman was an undesirable person if left alone; but he had three characteristics which were very valuable. He was very thrifty, he was very diligent, and he lived very peacably with his fellow men. [AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: And very cheap.] The Chinaman was prepared to go to the Transvaal to earn a good wage; he was determined to return home if he could, to die in his own country. The statistics given by Sir Robert Hart showed that in the last twenty-five years, 4,750,000 Chinamen had gone abroad to work and that no less than 4,000,000 of them had voluntarily returned home. The Chinaman was to be protected while at work—if that were necessary—by an organisation for the purpose which had worked extremely well in Singapore and Borneo, and he had no more idea that he was being sold into slavery than we at home chose to put into his head.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): He does not know, but he soon will.

*MR. MALCOLM said that the Chinaman was, after all, a man likely to look after his own interests. He was to have the conditions explained to him by a Chinaman, and it was absurd to suppose that a Chinaman, whose intelligence was respected all over the world, and who was as intelligent as the hon. Member for Woolwich, was to be duped as the hon. Member for Woolwich thought.

As to the Ordinance, he hoped that hon. Members who followed him would say what they really thought of that Ordinance. Some seemed to imagine it too strict, and others that it was too lax. Hon. Gentlemen had said that in consequence of the Ordinance Chinamen would flood the country in unfettered liberty, while in another breath it was stated that by the Ordinance Chinamen in the Transvaal would be reduced to slavery. They could not have it both ways. He had seen it stated that our diplomatic relations with China would be strained to a high point if we endeavoured to recruit Chinese subjects for such employment. He did not believe a word of it. Such difficulties had not hitherto occurred in countries where Chinese coolies were indentured; and he made bold to say that no country or colony had framed better regulations for the protection of the labourer before, during, and after the fulfilment of his contract than had the Legislative Council of the Transvaal. If the Ordinance were designed otherwise, if the conditions imposed were tyrannical and grievous, as was suggested, it would defeat its own object; the Chinese would not come. And if the yellow peril were so imminent as some hon. Gentlemen believed it could be stopped at a moment's notice. A perusal of the regulations, which he believed might yet be made more stringent, ought to drive any idea of slavery from so wise a head as that of his hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Isle of Wight. And as for "flooding the country" with Chinese there seemed to be no precaution which had not already been thought of to prevent the occurrence of so lamentable a result. In the interests of the Transvaal he thought this Ordinance ought to be ratified by the House, as an experiment, if they would, and with a time limit. But when all was said and done, he did think that the affairs of the Transvaal had reached a crisis neither healthy for the colony nor creditable to our repution as a Colonial Empire. It was rather unfair, surely, that the Transvaal should be dependent, as it was dependent, upon a foreign Government for 88 per cent. of its mining labour. That was, however, the fact. President Kruger concluded treaties with the Government of Portugal; and in return for allowing him to recruit Kaffir boys in Portuguese East Africa for the Transvaal mines he gave Portugal free trade with the Transvaal. He also arranged that if Durban in Natal, and East London in Cape Colony, wanted railways to Pretoria they must always charge 20 per cent. more per mile than was charged on the Delagoa Railway, all of which but 100 miles belonged to President Kruger. The House knew that at the Bloemfontein Conference, when there was a proposal to federate all South Africa in a Customs Union, the Portuguese Minister at once said, "If you give the same privilege in sending merchandise into the Transvaal as we have got, we shall shut off your supply of Kaffir labour recruited from Portuguese territory." The Portuguese Government had Great Britain in the hollow of their hands. He had read all the evidence, and had tried to decide for himself impartially upon this subject, and it seemed to him that there was overwhelming testimony that there was a demand and a necessity for Asiatic labour from the whole British population of the Transvaal, and of Johannesburg in particular. He did not think there would be very much fear of going to a *referendum* on this subject. Only a month or two ago the municipal council nominated by Lord Milner were re-elected by the people of Johannesburg on a very low franchise, all but one man, and he was the sole opponent of Asiatic labour. He believed that that showed that the British subjects of the Transvaal were in favour of Chinese labour rather than face ruin.

They had, therefore, practically the whole British in the Transvaal friendly to this importation scheme. Who were against it? Not the Boer population, who stood aloof in spite of the active propaganda fostered amongst them by the Dutch party in the Cape Colony. That was a significant fact, but easily explained when it was realised that the Boers, of all people, were acutely conscious of the shortage of labourers for mining or for any other purpose in the Transvaal. No, the real opposition came from Cape Colony—from that section of the Cape Parliament whose sole desire was to get the Transvaal Government into difficulties, to discredit Lord Milner, to bring about an overwhelming demand for self-government in the new colonies, and to regain for the Boers by the ballot box what they lost by the sword. Every day their chaplain prayed that they might not be "blinded by private interest, prejudice, or partial affections," and he hoped this would not be forgotten in the division lobby. By their votes they would assume the responsibility for making or marring the future of a British colony which was in urgent need at the present moment. "Shareholders can wait for dividends," said Sir P. Fitzpatrick himself, "but white men cannot wait for bread." Let them not be afraid to face their constituents with the whole story of this thing, and prove, as they could prove up to the hilt, that if the white man was to earn a living wage for himself and his family in the Transvaal, without being reduced to Kaffir work, there must be a huge increase in unskilled labour which at the present time was only forthcoming from China. Let them shatter for ever the idle superstition that "the Transvaal exists and is run for the benefit of 'German capitalists.'" It was a shameful libel upon any British colony to say that. There were hundreds of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, as honest as the day, living on the Rand, and he pleaded for them and the country they had so largely helped to develop. Those pioneers of British industry and civilisation found the

Transvaal accessible only by bullock tracks, and they had webbed it with railways; they found there a population which could only find fern wood for fuel, and they now supplied the colony with coal; they found there but a few running streams of water, but there now existed there a network of dams and reservoirs supplemented by an outlay of £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 for water for the Rand. They had tapped the brains of the world for their industry, the harvest was ready but the labourers were few. Therefore he held it to be the duty of the House to help, and not to hinder and harass, the prosecution of this work of development by ratifying the Ordinance without delay.

*MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said his hon. friend opposite had addressed the House with his usual clearness. Let it be remembered, however, that all the progress and advancement made in South Africa which the hon. Member had so well described had been accomplished, not by, but without the introduction of foreign labour. He spoke of the dignity of labour, but in the next sentence they discovered what he meant by it. It was consistent in the hon. Member's view, with the dignity of labour that it should be forced. The hon. Member dilated on the morality of the operation of the enforcement of labour, and mentioned that the Directors were the trustees of the shareholders in the mines. He wanted to point out that they in this House of Commons were also trustees—trustees for millions of British subjects and for the cause of liberty. What was the general nature of this Ordinance? It was an Ordinance to facilitate the establishment of a convict settlement mitigated by the chance of a forty-eight hours ticket-of-leave. They were to have a Government Inspectorate both in Africa and China, and although this was to be set up in the interests of the mines, he had not yet heard that the mines were to contribute anything towards the expense. This Ordinance appeared to him to be inconsistent with the elementary notions of freedom; and having gone through much of the Blue-books on this subject, he had come to the conclusion that this Ordinance was antagonistic both to white labour in South Africa and also to black labour in South Africa.

His first proposition was that the Government, as such, had in point of fact not inquired into this subject of Chinese labour. He would go farther and say that this Government, although apprised of the movement, had deliberately shut the mouths of witnesses who were prepared to give their testimony upon the Chinese labour question. The terms of the reference to the Transvaal Labour Commission were framed carefully and in such a manner that they excluded this question from the Commission. Why was the reference so framed? This was not a new question. Those acquainted with the management of affairs in South Africa were quite familiar with the topic of the importation of Chinese labour. If there was the urgency now claimed and a Commission and machinery ready for inquiry, why was the Chinese question not put under investigation instead of being excluded from the terms of the reference? Why, when there had been a maximum of premeditation in certain quarters outside were they to be left with only a minimum of deliberation in this House? Not only were the terms of reference carefully drawn, but there was also a rigorous suppression of evidence that was ready to hand. He wished to tell the Colonial Secretary frankly that he did not think it made for harmony in the relations of one race to another, to use such language as he employed last night with regard to General Botha, who was spoken of in terms which implied and expressed that he had suppressed evidence. There was a suppression of evidence: but it was not suppression by General Botha, but suppression by the Labour Commission of the evidence of General Botha. General Botha had actually prepared a written statement of the evidence he was willing to lay before the Commission appointed to investigate the shortage of labour; but when he tendered that evidence they declined to receive it. Reference was made by the Colonial Secretary to General Botha declining to have his views expressed by some other person. What would the right hon. Gentleman have done if a Government Commission had declined to accept his evidence direct? Would he have permitted any man to give it second-hand for him? General Botha was asked if he would tell the Commission what in his opinion, would be the effect of importing labour into Natal, and he replied that the best thing he could say in reply would be to read a paragraph from his "statement." Perhaps it would be said that that statement had reference to Natal, and had nothing to do with Chinese labour. But at a later stage of his evidence the matter was cleared up. One of the Commissioners asked why the statement offered by General Botha had not been accepted. Then the Chairman said that statement had been handed to him that morning, and he had had representations made to him. "It was impossible to ask him to delete certain portions of it," said the Chairman, "as it mainly dealt with the question of Chinese labour, which is not before us." With regard to this, all he would say was that it was not in the mouth of the Government which had sanctioned the institution of a Commission so carefully limited, either to hustle the House of Commons, or to make any reflection or suggestion of suppression of evidence against an honourable and distinguished man like General Botha. It stood confessed accordingly that they were doing this thing without any Government inquiry at all. The present policy was one of "hustle." It followed an agitation promoted mostly by skilful, powerful, clever men interested in the development of the mining industry.

How did this scheme arise? Was the scheme launched from humane and patriotic motives — a scheme having for its main object the benefit of the natives, the colonists, or the country, or the unification of South Africa? No; it was a scheme to reduce oncost, and to increase profits in the mines. Reflections had been made upon General Botha. On the other hand, Sir George Farrar had been defended by the Colonial Secretary. But when evidence came from that quarter he was entitled to ask who Sir George Farrar was? There was a "G. Farrar" who signed the famous forged telegram about the women and children in Johannesburg? Was this the man upon whom this upright Government relied? Was this the man who was sentenced to death for high treason? This would not do. They must examine these testimonies, and bring things home to the people of this country, and inform them that they were again being deluded and misled. He would as soon ground a national policy upon the Report of that Labour Commission as he would ground a policy of Imperial finance upon the Report of the Birmingham Tariff Commission. The direction and scheme of the movement had been the same all through, and had been premeditated. How did he prove premeditation before the war? The first proposition in this debate was that there was a shortage of labour, against which all economic efforts were unavailing. They had heard about that before. South Africa got the better of it so far back as 1891. He would quote the opinion of the mining community from the Chamber of Mines report of that year—

> "The mining community has made strong endeavours to relieve itself of this unreasonable burden, but, standing alone, little can be done, and it is feared the efforts of the mines cannot be much longer sustained if the Volksraad and the Government will do nothing to assist them."

How alarmist it all read! Yet in subsequent years the production of those very mines, which could not "be much longer sustained," reached the most fabulous proportions. If all that was a delusion then, why should they now for the first time give way to the cry which had arisen from similar quarters, in a similar interest? What was the essence of the oft attempted scheme? It was an uneconomic proposal to combine a full supply of labour with a reduction of wages. Year after year they found the same attempt being made to force up the supply and at the same time keep down the wages. Take now Report for the year 1892. There it was stated—

> "There appear to your committee but two methods by which the rate of native wages can be reduced. One by combination among employers, the other by the introduction of an adequate supply of labour."

Coming to the Report for the year 1894, it states—

> "Two main objects have been kept in view. The principal one the maintenance of supply, the second the reduction of the rate of wages."

Unhappily for these schemes there was at the time a Boer Government in power which would not assent to those proposals in so far as they involved the forcing of labour. In 1895 the President was called upon at Pretoria with that

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ject, "who would not, however, con-ent to the employment of coercion." his apparently occurred in the Spring of 1895, and in the end of 1895 they had the Jameson Raid. It failed; and, after order was restored, the same scheme, culminating in this Ordinance, was resumed. Yet in 1897 and 1898 they found a marvellous change. Order had been restored, and to the surprise of the mine-owners themselves, the supply of labour began to exceed the demand, and down went wages for a time. Were they content? Not at all. Instead of making the supply equate with the demand, and the demand of the mine-owners equate with the supply, the mining industry was worked to its utmost limit, and in the end of 1898 a new shortage, on account of the great development of the industry again appeared. The coercion of labour could not be hoped for, and then in 1899 they had war. Such was the sequence of events, and what a story it was! This was a project from beginning to end to lower wages and raise profits, and a scheme to do that regardless of the ordinary economic conditions of South Africa.

He thought he had proved his point as to the reduction of wages, but his second point was settled in a somewhat curious way by the party which was now agitating for this Ordinance. It was settled shortly after the war, on 25th October, 1900, when the Chamber of Mines reported that the schedule of wages in existence prior to the war had been abandoned and instead of about £4 per month a scale with a minimum of 30s. and a maximum of 35s. per month had been adopted. If that reduction of wages had not taken place one large element of the very difficulties which had been the excuse for this Ordinance would, in his opinion, have disappeared. The natives had had every inducement to go elsewhere. There was unsettlement over half the continent and an enormous demand for military assistance. The drafting of men from the mines was in part because they got better pay during military operations. Could this Government not wait for anything? Here they were only at the beginning of 1904, and after the war in South Africa, was nothing to be allowed to the recuperative powers of nature or the healing influences of time? General Botha's view as to these was accepted by the large majority of the white people of South Africa, both Dutch and British. In the period he referred to, British money was being spilled like water, first over a system of military operations, and secondly in restoring the havoc and devastation caused by the war. Why should they, during a period of transition such as he had described, be hustled into adopting an Ordinance which was repugnant to the feelings of the British people? General Botha had stated that the Kaffirs were returning, and "while six months ago I could not obtain a single Kaffir I have now from thirty to thirty-five." General Botha agreed that the present state of things with regard to shortage of labour was exceptional and was brought about by the abnormal condition of things after the war. Patience was what was required: above all things, patience. Now the efforts made to carry this Ordinance were characterised in the first place by threats; in the second place by a determined suppression and distortion of public and private opinion; thirdly, by a complete regard for the gold industry; and fourthly, by a lack of due regard for British interests and for human freedom. Some curious things occurred in regard to these threats. They were expressed as follows in the Majority Report—

> "A certain development in the main industry of the country beyond the point reached in 1899 must take place or they must adopt the logical alternative of revising the position of the whole country."

What did that mean? If a Boer Assembly had used that language they would have all been up for sedition or high treason. The Report went on to state—

> "An industry of this magnitude must advance or fall back; the advance is impossible without the solution of the labour difficulty, and a set back would upset the equilibrium, not only of the Transvaal but of the whole of the South African Colonies."

What equilibrium? Finanical equilibrium or political equilibrium? He did not like to hear language of that kind; and he viewed with considerable disfavour any body of men who would venture to put that before the British Crown. There had been a suppression and distortion of private and public opinion. They had heard of a letter from Mr. Tarbutt, but what happened to the man who produced Mr. Tarbutt's letter? The letter which appeared in the *Star* of Johannesburg on 19th November, 1903, showed the unscrupulous tactics adopted by the mine-owners; and Mr. Creswell was told that at a meeting of his directors great surprise was expressed at the tenor of his evidence! Then came the whole sordid and dishonouring story which culminated in the dismissal of this man who had told the truth and who had produced a most damning piece of evidence against the gold mining speculators. They were asked to trust the Chamber of Mines; but if any of the members of that Chamber had so dealt with Mr. Creswell with reference to the evidence given before a Committee of this House, the Chamber of Mines might have been condemned to a convict settlement, though without a forty-eight hours ticket-of-leave. One of Mr. Creswell's complaints was that in giving his evidence he was not permitted to go into the general state of the mines in the neighbourhood. Take next the case of Mr. Monypenny. With regard to Mr. Monypenny he confessed he heard with great surprise what the Colonial Secretary said about him. He admitted the right of the mine-owners to dismiss Mr. Monypenny; but he asked the House to consider his position. Here was a man who wrote what he knew was unpopular with his employers, and he thought that was a man the House of Commons would willingly rely upon. He said—

> "For twelve or fifteen months the *Star* has consistently opposed the policy to which the Chamber of Mines has now committed itself. We have opposed it because, on general principles, we have no faith in short cuts to prosperity or in mechanical solutions of organic problems. We have opposed it because we are convinced that no real trial has been given to the alternatives, and that this policy is a policy of despair only to be tolerated when every other expedient has failed. It is a deliberate attempt to arrest, and, in the interests of impatience, artificially to reverse a process of evolution whose results are already beginning to be visible, and which promises in the course of time to emancipate South Africa from that complete dependence on inferior coloured labour which has hitherto limited its development."

Further on he said—

> "The financial houses, in whom in the present instance, those rights are vested, have chosen one side of the question, the Editor of the *Star* has chosen the other; and as from either point of view the question is of the first importance the position has now become impossible. To the policy of Chinese immigration, to which the Chamber of Mines has decided to vote its energy, the present Editor of the *Star* remains absolutely opposed and declines in any way to identify himself with such an experiment. To the ideal of a white South Africa, which, to whatever qualifications it may necessarily be subject, is something very different from the ideal of a Chinese South Africa, he resolutely clings with perfect faith that, whatever its enemies may do to-day that, ideal will inevitably prevail. But as the financial houses which control the mining industry of the Transvaal have for the present enrolled themselves among its enemies the present Editor of the *Star* withdraws."

Mr. Thomas Shaw.

Was he not right in saying that those Gentlemen were adepts in the art of suppressing and distorting both private and public opinions?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): My hon. friend says that I threw discredit upon Mr. Monypenny. I certainly did not do so, and I did not say a word to that effect.

*MR. THOMAS SHAW said he had accepted to the full the statement of his right hon. friend. What he meant was that when they had a man in Mr. Monypenny's position willing to sacrifice his position for his testimony his opinions deserved far higher credit than they had received. They had reached a state of things when the evidence of the Commission was deprived of all weight whatever. The Commission had packed and unpacked the witness box: and as for public opinion, he would as soon take the verdict of Park Lane on democracy or set himself to study some new pamphlet on "Liberty from a financial point of view." Those cases—Creswell and Monypenny—were instances of how this poison was working. Upon the force of attraction (after all, a plain and peaceful economic force) the Report said—

> "There are, nevertheless, many other elements in the problem. Viewed, for example, from the standpoint of what may be called the attractive forces, the supply is affected by such elements as rate of wages, working condition, nature of treatment by employers, cheap and rapid means of communication and so forth."

> "This conclusion appears to be well founded, but as the effect of wages is merely attractive and not coercive the probable result of the reduction of wages by the mines was merely to

cause the majority to seek employment in other industries where the wages were higher."

"Attractive and not coercive": this would never do. Yet it was the key to their attitude towards black labour. But what was their position with regard to white labour? He remembered a speech of the ex-Colonial Secretary at Cannock Chase in 1900, and he wanted to know if under this Ordinance they were realising the magnificent ideal that "the war was a miners' war," and had been undertaken in order that justice might be done to the British miners in the Transvaal.

The critical nature of the circumstances had been spoken of. But where did the urgency alleged by the Colonial Secretary come in? He found that in January, 1903, there was produced in the Transvaal an output of 199,000 oz. of fine gold, and in January 1904, this same hard-up, poorly-equipped Colony produced 288,000 oz., equal to £1,226,000 in one month, or at the rate of £14,750,000 sterling in one year. What more did any one want? Lord Milner said there was complete stagnation, that people were out of work, and that there was an emigration of white people going on, that a crisis was impending. This was very dreadful; but we had grown rather sceptical of and callous to such appeals, for the simple reason that they were familiar with the very same language with reference to Great Britain. They knew it all already. There was a strange family likeness in this language on the part of men in this country and in Africa, whose end and aim seemed to be high-priced food at home and low-priced labour in the Colony. If a Colony, after such a war, was not content with the steady rise in its output of gold which he had described it was hard to please. What did Imperalists think now about the "march of Empire," about the "pegging out of claims," about "equal rights?" Was the language too strong which in earlier days had denounced the lust of gold and the machinations of a gang of capitalists? He spoke not without book. Mr. Tarbutt, in his letter to Mr. Creswell, said that he—

> "Had consulted the Consolidated Gold Fields people and one of the members of the board of the Village Main Reef had consulted Messrs. Wernher, Beit, and Co.," and "the feeling seems to be one of fear that, having a large number of white men employed on the Rand in the position of labourers, the same troubles will arise as are now pervalent in Australia—viz., that the combination of the labouring classes will become so strong as to be able to dictate, not only on the question of wages, but also on political questions," etc.

These magnates were the enemies of white labour; and this Ordinance gave effective shape to their designs. The hon. Member for Bermondsey referred to "whites of foreign origin," and poured contempt upon them when they were "poor." For his part, if he were asked whether South Africa had suffered more from poor whites of foreign origin than from rich whites of foreign origin, he should have his doubts.

The substance of this Ordinance was the importation and detention of human beings under a condition of non-citizenship. He desired to state emphatically that he declined to recognise in a free country or free Empire a condition of non-citizenship. Look at the Colonial Secretary's description of the country for which we had spent and suffered so much and where they were told that the condition of things was so rotten that even a navvy got bored with it and had to leave. The fabric of society in the Transvaal was so ramshackle that, according to the Colonial Secretary, it required to be underpinned with Chinese labour. But there were to be oases in the desert, the establishment of little Arcadias, euphemistically described as Chinese villages. How consolatory to the lover of freedom! Think of the privileges of the inhabitants of those villages? short hours? high pay? advancement to every high grade of employment and life easy for these blessed inhabitants? In every line of the Ordinance was there respect and reverence for that ideal of the British people, which happened to be the cause of liberty? Well, perhaps not all this, perhaps not any of it. But by special reminder of the Chinese Government, the lash was to be forbidden. What a mockery it all was! If the Boers had imposed such conditions upon any human being every Jingo in this country would have fanned the flames of war in the names of civilisation, liberty, and humanity. His hon. friend the Member for Bermondsey said, in one of those topsy-turvy sentences of his, that Downing Street had been the curse of that land. The hon. Member need not be afraid. The headquarters of the Government were being removed to Park Lane.

> "The strongest castle, tower, or town,
> The golden bullet beats it down."

This Government, whatever its many virtues, could not be described as a strong Government. How long, however, were the British people going to stand this? He wished his right hon. friend—he said it from his heart, and with all respect for him—had had the courage to put his foot down to Lord Milner. Let him assure his right hon. friend, if it was not too late—to do it, that if he would only resist the malign influences which were behind this measure—influences which were inimical to the working classes and to every class in this country—and if he would only refuse this Ordinance, he would have behind him the voice of a liberty-loving and absolutely undivided people.

***Sir JOHN ROLLESTON** (Leicester) said that although he must admit that in his constituency the only public expression of opinion that he had heard on this matter was favourable to this Amendment, he thought that the issues were somewhat confused and capable perhaps of explanation. In the first place, a rather unreasoning prejudice against the shareholders in the gold mines, of whom, however, he was not one, induced many people to object to any support at all being given to the gold industry. Secondly, a prejudice, equally unreasoning he thought, against any form of time-bargain with foreign labourers, inclined many others, perhaps unthinkingly, to regard such a proposal as the indication of a system of slavery. It seemed to be considered by many people that gold got out of the earth was won solely for the profit of the proprietors of the mines. This could not be the case. The Transvaal people, the Transvaal land, and the commerce of South Africa wanted this gold primarily, and subsequently all the gold-using countries wanted it. This country itself had, in the past, experienced periods of both prosperity and adversity owing to the fertility or sterility of the gold mines and deposits. Agricultural and commercial depression experienced a marvellous rebound some fifty or sixty years ago from the gold discoveries of California and Australia. Then these deposits becoming again exhausted, a period of comparative depression set in, until at last renewed prosperity appeared to be in sight owing to the recent discoveries in South Africa and Western Australia. The annual yield of gold went up some five years ago to an aggregate of, he believed, £60,000,000, the largest known in the history of the world and it seemed as though prosperity was about to be experienced from this vitalising and fertilising flow. Then came the war, and the stoppage of mining operations. The yield went down again. The gold crop, though in sight, could not be gathered in, and that, it seemed, was somewhat the situation to-day.

He submitted that more gold was wanted for every trade purpose to-day not only in South Africa but in this country, and that any check to its being obtained was a check to the prosperity of this country. We wanted gold to pay for our food supplies in time of war, when the course of trade and the ordinary exchange of commodities was disturbed or stopped, but there was no supply in sight. The City of London certainly wanted more gold. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking there recently, asked the great municipalities to bank the fires of their progress, to suspend their operations, and not to make further demands upon the supply of gold which was in an attenuated condition, even in this the great financial centre of the world. Coming from the Finance Minister that was indeed a significant admission.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): What about himself. Why does not he economise something

***Sir JOHN ROLLESTON** said he could not speak for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he could only quote what the right hon. Gentleman said. He was well aware that the trade of this country was conducted upon a huge system of credit, and that the metal gold was seldom seen in business transactions; but though unseen it exercised a vast influence on those transactions. Gold was the base of that superstructure of credit, and the base must bear a proportion to the superstructure. Gold was the only money in this country—the only metal which the public could pass through the Mint at will, and it was the only legal tender when coined. In proportion as this money abounded was prosperity felt in the occupations and enterprises of men. The amount of gold it would exchange for was the measure of value of all property. Money was as necessary as bread, while it was the law of the land that bread must be purchased with money. And so, in a gold country like this, when the mines of the world were not fertile, the want of gold was generally felt. The owner of Consols felt it, as the amount of gold for which he could exchange his property got less; the owners of all other securities felt it; the banker felt it: he could not lend so freely as before and so enterprise was checked. The alteration or enlargement was not carried out, expenses were cut down, and so the discouraging effect of gold scarcity was felt throughout the whole community, until it might result in scarcity of employment, and perhaps want of food amongst the people. The war might have had some effect as well on the scarcity of gold, as large sums had had to be sent to foreign centres for supplies, but that did not affect his argument that an increased supply of gold could remedy the situation. A gold yield again of £60,000,000 annually, or more, would alter it, and he desired that again, or a larger yield. In view of the greater number of countries which were now using gold a much larger yield was required. It was not always that gold was in sight when it was scarce, but it was in sight in South Africa, and he hoped that nothing might be done, in this country, to prevent this harvest from being reaped by difficulties being placed in the way of our colonies obtaining harvesters.

With regard to the importation of Chinese it really seemed as if some people imagined that under the suzerainty of the British Crown the cruelties practised by the followers of Cortez and Pizarro in Mexico and Peru were to be expected in South Africa. But the African native was free, and if he did not want to sell his labour no one could compel him; but if he had a distaste for work, and could live without it, why should other labourers be prevented from taking his place? Labourers who, although Asiatics, were willing to come, wanted to come for a period of service, for the sake of the wage at the end of it. He would undertake to say that their life in South Africa would be happier and more prosperous than in China. Mining, especially in deep levels, was, he believed, not an agreeable form of labour, and if Chinese coolies were willing to do this dirty work, which even the African native turned up his nose at, it seemed to him insulting to white workmen to contend that it should be kept for them. While, of course, not defending the compulsory importation of African slaves into the cotton and sugar plantations of North America, yet it was clear that these crops could not have been planted or harvested without this, and that were it not for this huge imported negro population, now free, that harvest even now could not be gathered in. The prosperity of the United States had been largely contributed to by these black labourers, who did work which white men could not and did not want to do. History, therefore, showed that there had been occasions when the importation of labour, even from another hemisphere, had been economically useful to mankind, and although the cruelties of the earlier methods were to be much deplored, yet a voluntary bargain of mutual benefit might well be defended to-day. There were objections to many great industries even in this country—some sanctimonious and some practical—the demoralised condition of some they saw written about in the public Press. Some people objected to the establishment of collieries, as the smoke and dust fouled the country side, and the advent of a mining population was stated to demoralise the peasantry. But these great works must go on: the treasures of the earth must be won; and while the laws of civilised nations were that before a man could eat or drink, or clothe himself, he must have gold, it followed that the winning of gold was probably the most important industrial operation on this planet, and should not be discouraged, in deference even to the exaggerated fears and nervous qualms either of the Episcopal or the Nonconformist conscience. He had always understood that in the search for and getting of gold more money and lives were lost than in any other industry. But the gambler's spirit kept the game up, and, although the motive of the searcher and getter might be base and sordid, yet his efforts might go to the ultimate benefit of mankind. In any case, in South Africa, the harvest was ripe and the labourers were ready; and in view of the great benefit which an increased production of gold might confer on this and other countries he, for one, hoped that no action of this House might defer, interrupt, or check that output, and in this view he was afraid that he was unable to support the Amendment.

*CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs) said he very much regretted that the first two Motions on which he had been called upon to vote in the House concerned protection and slavery. The hon. Member who last spoke gave the House a very pleasant idea of the country in which he wished to live, stating that gold was more necessary than food. He had no desire to live in a country of that sort. The hon. Member had also told them that gold had been sent out of this country to pay for the war. As a matter of fact, there was more gold in the country now than there was three or four years ago. He wished to support the Amendment on three grounds. In the first place, he objected to the manner in which this agitation for the importation of Chinese labour had been raised. He himself had absolutely no faith in the Labour Commission. He had heard a description of Sir George Farrar given by the hon. Member for the Hawick Burghs, he did not know whether that description was correct or not, but he knew that at least five members of the Labour Commission were members of the Chamber of Mines in Johannesburg, and if the Government had wished to have a proper Commission to examine into the question of the scarcity of labour in the Transvaal, they should have taken the trouble to appoint men absolutely above suspicion. In the second place, he had no reason to believe that, with time, a sufficient amount of labour would not be forthcoming. The Report of the Labour Commission pointed to several causes which might have influenced the supply of labour. One particular cause of shortage not mentioned in the debate was the untrustworthiness of the recruiting agents employed. In his evidence before the Commission, Mr. Samuelson, Under-Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal stated that "he felt that if the flow of native labour could be directed to Johannesburg or towards any other part of South Africa without the use of these recruiting agents, it would be a good thing for the natives themselves." Mr. Samuelson added that there was no reason to believe there was a shortage of native labour, and that there was Kaffir labour in Natal capable of going to the support of the Transvaal. The same witness was questioned by the Chairman as to the statement in the Blue-book that in the South African states there were 201,640 natives employed but that the total of able-bodied men available was only 164,000, so that there were actually 40,000 more employed than the total of able-bodied men! Mr. Samuelson replied that he disapproved at the time that statement was made; he did not agree with that statement personally. This was evidence that the House would not accept the Report of the Labour Commission. The statements were in several instances not true. His third ground of objection was that the principle was wrong. In a letter in that morning's *Times* it was objected that the Opposition view of the case was the "Exeter Hall view." He was quite ready to accept the "Exeter Hall view." The hon. Member for Leicester had described the Opposition as supporting the exaggerated opinion of the Episcopal and Nonconformist conscience. It was high time that that opinion should be heard in the House of Commons. The Colonial Secretary had said he regretted the necessity for the Ordinance and had described it as a last resort in face of the terrible state of the Transvaal. If it were a last resort, it was an extremely bad one. They had heard a good deal about the investors in the mines. In common with many hon. Members he himself had invested in the mines, and he had it on the authority of bankers that there was hardly a cottager a shopkeeper, or a householder in the United Kingdom who was not at present interested in these properties. But he believed there was not a man in this country who would not be ready to wait until the Transvaal were developed and be-prepared for a time to forego his dividends rather than give his consent to this abominable scheme for the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal.

*LORD ALWYNE COMPTON (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) said that the question before the House was perhaps of the very greatest importance that had ever been brought before it in this generation. From whatever standpoint they looked at it the consequences might be fraught with the very gravest results. The ground of discussion had been so carefully travelled over by previous speakers, and the able and exhaustive speech of the Colonial Secretary, the previous night, had disposed so effectually of all the arguments with which the Amendment had been supported, that he should not have intervened in the debate had it not been that he himself had a peculiar interest in this great question—an interest derived from the fact that at the time of the South African War, for several months, it was his duty to be at Johannesburg; and at that time it was also his duty to take a part under Martial Law in the administration of justice. He was made a Justice of the Peace at Johannesburg, and therefore was brought in contact with the conditions of native life in that city. The questions which so many Members had asked, and which no doubt the country would ask, were as to the shortage of labour, whether every effort had really been made to obtain Kaffir labour on the East Coast, and whether any genuine effort had been made to test the employment of British workmen. He would answer these questions very shortly. It was quite self-evident that the enormous initial expense which it would cost the mine-owners to obtain Chinese labour, was a sufficient answer to the question as to whether every effort had not been exhausted in order to find native black labour, which there was no doubt they would have infinitely preferred if they could obtain it. Then, with regard to the question of the employment of British workmen, might he say—for it came within his own experience—and the House of Commons was always most ready to listen to the personal experience of any Member on any matter — that a brother officer and a friend of his was in command of 1,000 men during the war. At the conclusion of the war, by the law of the survival of the fittest, there were 130 of these men who desired to remain in South Africa, and his friend took the ordinary methods of endeavouring to find places for them. He went to Lord Milner, who referred him to Mr. Creswell. That gentleman made an offer to employ these 130 men and pay them 5s. a day with free food and lodging, and 10s. a day if they found for themselves. His friend went back to the men with that proposition; and the one answer they gave was that they did not think that labour in the mines would suit them. His friend said that it would give them occupation for a time, and that when things settled down they might be able to get other and better work. Yet only one man out of the 130 accepted the offer, and he only remained in Mr. Creswell's employment for one month, then giving it up. Hon. Gentlemen would read a letter in that day's *Times* from Lord Lovat, giving a similar experience. That showed that as far as these men were concerned they could not be tempted, under the conditions, to work in the mines.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said there were hundreds of white men employed in unskilled labour on the Rand at present.

*LORD ALWYNE COMPTON said that Mr. Creswell's experiment was made with a view to ascertaining whether white labour was practicable in the mines at all; and in order, at the same time, to give employment to soldiers who desired to remain in the country. Mr. Creswell's effort was a failure. It seemed to him that the arguments brought forward in support of the Amendment showed very great weakness, because they depended entirely on accusations of *mala fides* against all interested in the matter. The arguments were also characterised by great exaggeration of language, indeed he might say by a hopelessly ridiculous exaggeration of language. He thought that every speaker in support of the Amendment used, for motives into which he would not inquire, the word "slavery." He wished to analyse that word. What did slavery mean? As far as his limited intelligence went slavery meant a state in which one person was bound to another for life in servitude or bondage, from which he could not escape. Any ordinary intelligent man would take that view. But how did that compare with the proposition under the Ordinance? The Chinaman was to be asked whether he wished to go to the Transvaal or not; he was not to be compelled to go unless he wished; and he would be told the conditions under which he was to go. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said that the Chinaman would not be told, but of course he would. Further, he would be allowed to take his wife and children with him; and on arrival in South Africa he was to be an inhabitant of a village planned by experts and in that village he would live in the same conditions as the Kaffir now lived in the Transvaal. He would earn higher wages than he would be able to obtain in his own country, and eventually he would be enabled to return to China, at the expiration of his service, a richer man than he left it. Was it not, therefore, an exaggeration of language to call that slavery? Could it be compared to the conditions under which the Kaffirs lived in compounds before the war? Was that slavery? If it was slavery, why did not the great Liberal Party, which hung like a load on all who went to the war, pat the soldiers on the back and tell them they were fighting for the emancipation of slaves. No doubt hon. Gentlemen would not only use the word "slavery" in the House but on every platform in the country; and he only wished his voice could spread throughout the country in order to combat such an exaggerated view. Another question was—What did the soldiers who fought in the war think? The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Camberwell asked that question last night. He thought hon. Gentlemen opposite would be wise in not repeating it. He had served in the British Army for seventeen years, and he knew that soldiers had oftentimes very inconvenient memories. The soldiers who fought in South Africa remembered 1881. The hon. Gentleman last evening said that the soldiers were fighting under the emblem of freedom; but the emblem of freedom in 1881 was not allowed to remain unsullied. Many of the soldiers who fought in the late war were more intelligent than hon. Gentlemen opposite imagined; and they fully recognised that it was the great mistake of 1881 that was the direct result of war in 1899. If the soldiers were asked what was the cause of the war in South Africa, they would answer simply and justly that it was the insulting ultimatum which directed the late Queen to remove Her own troops from her own colony.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said it would be convenient to know whether hon. Gentlemen in this debate were entitled to discuss the cause and the reasons for the late war. If they were the debate would take some time.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I did not interrupt the noble Lord because I understood that he was replying briefly to a casual observation of the hon. Member for Camberwell; but I should have stopped him if he proceeded further.

*Lord ALWYNE COMPTON said he wished to apologise for the digression, but he felt very warmly on the subject. Another argument used in the debate was that the mine-owners wished to get rid of British workmen. An hon. Gentleman stated last evening that the output of gold on the Rand at present was equal to the output before the war. He challenged that statement. The output was nothing like what it was before the war. The number of stamps working before the war was 7,345, now there were only 4,310 working. That was the true test as to the relative output. He had not any prejudice against mine-owners. He knew a great many of them, and he knew that they were very honourable men, carrying on a perfectly legitimate and honourable industry. It appeared, however, to be assumed that the accusation of *mala fides* against the mine-owners was true; but even that did not alter the facts of the case as regarded gold in South Africa.

What was the position? It was almost a truism to say that it was to the advantage of South Africa that its stores of gold should be distributed throughout the world as quickly as possible. If gold for the use of the world did not come from South Africa it must come from somewhere else. He also thought it was beyond doubt that there were undeveloped parts of

South Africa which showed immense stores of gold which could only be developed by the use of money, and that money could not be made in South Africa without the development of the mines in South Africa already in existence. He thought the debate on the fiscal policy would have taught the dullest that we must pay for our imports by our exports, and nobody would deny that gold was one of the best exports we could have. We had gold in South Africa which the present stagnation prevented from being extracted from the mines. The greater the stream of gold from South Africa the greater would be our exports into that country in the shape of machinery and all other commodities. Cape Colony was an object lesson in this respect. Everybody knew the rapidity with which that country developed on the discovery of diamonds. The same argument applied all over the world,—New South Wales, Australia, and California. New countries progressed slowly and surely, and it was only when there was a great discovery of precious metals or precious stones that they developed by leaps and bounds. Hon. Members opposite might think it better that South Africa should develop slowly, but he did not hold that view. He agreed with those who had said the great fault of our administration in South Africa had been that we had never been able to accept the opinion and advice of our councillors there. He hoped we were not going to repeat that mistake now. Hon. Members opposite were content to rely on the belated manifestoes of the Boer leaders, and such inferences as they drew, but he was not. He based his opinion and was content to rely on the opinion of Lord Milner and Sir Arthur Lawley. He was content to rely on the fact that the great men of the Transvaal desired the importation of Chinese labour, and he believed, if this Amendment was carried, it would result, not only in further stagnation, but in all probability in the future ruin of the country.

MR. WILLIAM McARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell) said that having lived a great part of his life in Australia, he had had opportunities of observing the conditions under which Chinese lived in large towns there, and the effect which they had on the white population. Australia, as much as any part of the Empire, shared in the great development of the Imperial idea. With that idea he did not quarrel in the least. But on what did they base their conception of the Imperial idea. They in that House had always studiously maintained that, wherever England acquired territory or authority over native races, she owed a duty to those races, and it had been the constant effort of English statesmen, even at the risk of not leaving her colonies quite free, in her dealings with native races to see that native labour in native territories under the dominion of the King, should be conducted under decent conditions. To go further than that, the House had repeatedly interfered with self-governing colonies with regard to those conditions. Whatever, therefore, might be said as to the justice of the Colonies managing their own affairs, the House could not divest itself of its inherent authority or responsibility in regard to the treatment of native races in territories under the British Crown. Australia made stringent regulations of her own, and submitted to the Imperial Government that these regulations should be made still more stringent, and within the last year or so we had seen a still greater development of the inherent dislike in Australia to the importation of alien races. One of the first actions of the Federal Parliament of Australia was to decree that imported labour should cease. So that, from the general point of view, Australian sentiment would be absolutely opposed to the importation of Chinese into the Transvaal, and he considered that the people in Australia had a peculiar claim upon us in this instance. If we were to estimate the value of attachment by the sacrifices made by our colonies in the recent war, surely no opinion had a better claim to be tried than the unanimous opinion of Australia and New Zealand in this matter. Although he had no title to say he represented Australia, he was perfectly certain that he spoke the practically unanimous opinion of every man and woman in Australia when he said he looked upon the proposal of the Government with horror and detestation; because Australians knew from experience what it meant. They had had Chinese coolies among them for years and years, but happily the evil was greatly diminished now, and he hoped it was within still further process of diminution. The result of Australian experience had been that they regarded the importation of Chinese in a large white community as a moral plague spot which ought to be stopped if possible. The Colonial Secretary the previous night, unintentionally he was sure, was somewhat unfair to the Australian view of this question. The right hon. Gentleman treated it as if it were a question of wages. It was by no means a question of wages or the competition of labour. The Chinaman in Australia did not compete very largely in the general labour market. The Australian objection to the importation of Chinamen was that it constituted a moral plague spot which the citizens were anxious and determined to get rid of. We were constantly boasting, and with truth, that whenever we took into our charge the affairs of a native colony we had done our best to raise the moral tone and the whole standard of life of those communities, and it was one of the proudest boasts of this country that in the main we had been successful. But how could anybody say we were doing nothing to lower the moral tone of the community in carrying out such a proposal as was now before the House? In his judgment it was not an Imperial idea to import into South Africa an alien race bringing almost every possible Eastern vice into a Western community. He declined to discuss the question from the point of view whether the mines could make money with Chinese labour and not with white labour. If we were to follow up the Imperial idea we ought to take account of the almost universal sentiment of white colonists against such a measure, and it was because he had seen the infinite evil which might occur from an aggregation of Chinese amongst a Western population that he urgently pressed upon every Member of the House that he had a direct responsibility in this matter. Speaking for himself, he would as soon be responsible for introducing the plague into the City of London as have any part or lot in assenting to the introduction of what would be a moral plague-spot into the community of South Africa.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he never remembered, in the twenty-one years of his Membership of this House, a matter of such serious importance, such widespread influence, being considered in debate in so light and airy a manner. In spite of what had been said by hon. Gentlemen opposite, this question resolved itself into the question of whether, after all these years, slavery was to be reintroduced into the British Empire. What was the attitude of the Government upon the matter. It was perfectly scandalous that the Government Bench should be in the condition it was. The Government were conspicuous by absence. It was the same on the previous day. Hardly a Minister deigned to put in an appearance at all, and during the course of the discussion which was at present taking place there had never been more than three or four Members on the Treasury Bench, and they were gentlemen who had never been men of first-rate importance, or men who had occupied great positions. Whatever view might be taken, the matter was one of sufficient importance to command the attention and appearance of the Government, which it did not appear to have done. He had listened with great pleasure to the speech of the hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Mr. McArthur), and could agree in the fullest manner with what the hon. Gentleman said as to the attitude of the Commonwealth of Australia in this matter. He had been permitted to judge of the colonial sentiment in the many visits he had made to that country, and could bear out what had been said with such effect by his hon. friend. The attitude of official Australia was strongly against the introduction of Chinese labour in South Africa. We had had experience of gold mining all over the world, and there was not a gold mine in the world which white men could not be found to undertake the working of. He could quite understand the proposal to introduce Chinese labour, if it could be shown that it was the last resource to keep the mines open, receiving the emphatic support of hon. Gentlemen like the noble Lord the Member for Biggleswade, who might be somewhat biassed by the fact that he owned so many shares in South African securities, and who said Chinese labour was a necessity. It was said that

Chinese labour was a necessity, but he believed that if the facts were laid clearly before the House, it would be seen that the mines could pay enormous profits, even though they employed white labour at reasonable wages. That being so, why were not white men obtained? As to the alleged impossibility of replacing by white men the Kaffirs who left the mines through the war, the country wanted to know what honest attempts had been made in that direction with the offer of reasonable terms. The fact was that no real attempt had been made. There were thousands of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen who would be glad to go to South Africa if proper wages were given. He did not say that they could be supplied wholesale so rapidly as the Chinese, but it was capable of proof that, if a sincere attempt were made, tens of thousands of honest white labouring men would be prepared to undertake the work on terms which would still leave the mine-owners an enormous profit.

In view of the present situation in the Far East, it was somewhat surprising that Tory Members should indulge in such language as had been used in the course of the debate with reference to the populations of other European countries. Italian workmen had been spoken of as "white trash," whose character and habits were so low that Chinese were preferable to them. That was hardly the way in which the white subjects of a friendly Power should be referred to. There was really no necessity to import members of different European races. If only the mine-owners were half as earnest in getting white men as they were in bringing about the recent war, it would be quite possible to secure the necessary supply. It was cruel and heart-breaking to be told that in order to work the mines in a British possession, the acquisition of which had cost the country millions of money and tens of thousands of lives, men were to be imported from China under conditions which amounted to semi-slavery. In London itself could be found numbers of able-bodied men willing and anxious to work to keep their wives and families from starvation, and yet the Government and the millionaires of Park Lane, instead of attempting to draft such men to South Africa, were to import at £8 a head Chinamen to do work which could be better done by white men if only they were given the opportunity of doing it. A balance-sheet, showing the difference between employing white men at standard wages and Chinese labour would afford interesting reading, and he believed it would show that the mine-owners, not satisfied with owning the mines and making enormous profits, actually grudged the wages of the workmen. That was really an infamous state of affairs. Whatever might be the opinion of the soldiers who fought in the war, there would be but one opinion among the vast majority of the working people who paid the £250,000,000 which the war cost—viz., that it was a disgrace that the first, and apparently the only, result of the struggle was the introduction, under the British flag, of a system of forced labour. Even those in favour of the proposal might agree that there was no immediate hurry in the matter. The members of the Transvaal Labour Commission might have been eminently qualified for the task they had to perform, but certainly their findings had not satisfied people generally that the whole of the facts had been brought to light, and before a final decision was arrived at there should be a fresh, thorough, and impartial inquiry into the whole question. The Government, however, would not accept that proposal, because the essence of the matter was that it should be hustled through without further inquiry. From every point of view the proposal was an innovation of a startling character; it was the introduction of slavery in almost its worst form. The noble Lord opposite objected to the term "slavery."

LORD ALWYNE COMPTON said his argument was that the conditions under which the Kaffirs lived before the war would obtain.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND reminded the House that the alleged object of the war was to give equality and freedom to all men under the British flag in South Africa, and now the noble Lord justified this proposal by saying that before the war slavery of a similar kind existed under the reign of Mr. Kruger. He declined to follow a bad example, whether set by Mr. Kruger or anybody else, and, in any case, it was no justification for setting up slavery in the British Empire. To-day hon. Members were to be asked by their votes to say that slavery would be allowed in a large portion of the British Empire. At elections in this country a favourite episode was the singing of "Britons never shall be slaves." That cry had floated hon. Gentlemen opposite into this House. After the vote which they would give to-night they should change their song—

> "Rule Britannia, Britannia money saves,
> By kicking Britons out of work for Chinese slaves."

He thought they would find that version of the song would not be so popular at election meetings. His hands were clean in this matter. He had no reason to love the British Empire. The Nationalists of Ireland had not been so very kindly dealt with by the British Government, and they were not in the slightest degree interested for the reputation of the Empire and for the Flag being unstained and unsullied. What they were interested in, and what their countrymen throughout the world were interested in, was the cause of human freedom and liberty. In the division to-night he and his hon. friends would vote for freedom and liberty. From the point of view of men who had no great love for the British Empire, he thought they should be rather pleased at the trend of events. As far as one could see, things were going badly for the British Empire at present. Lord Roberts had been dismissed from the War Office, and his place had been taken by one of the Gentlemen opposite. Now they were to have slavery in one of the newly-acquired British colonies. He believed that the effect of this measure would be disastrous in the extreme, and that before many years passed it would cause a disruption in South Africa far greater than that caused by the late war. He hoped it would stand on record that the representatives of Ireland voted unanimously against the proposal.

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON: With the permission of the House I should like to make a personal explanation. I understand that during my absence from the House the hon. Member who has just sat down referred to the speech I had lately made, and said that I was biassed because I held so many mining shares. I desire to say that I hold no shares of any sort or kind in South African mines.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: The noble Lord, I am sure, does not wish to misrepresent what I said. I never said that he had any mining shares in South Africa. What I said was that the noble Lord had shares in South African concerns. Unless I am misinformed—and if I am I withdraw the statement and express my regret for having made it—the noble Lord formerly possessed, if he does not now possess, 5,000 shares in the Chartered Company.

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON: I never held 5,000 shares in the Chartered Company, and I have no shares now. [An Hon. Member: Or any shares.] I have no shares.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: If that is the case I withdraw the statement.

*Sir H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth) said he had paid considerable attention to the question of Chinese labour in California, which he visited in 1873. Chinese labourers had just finished the Pacific Railway, and they were engaged in other forms of unskilled work. Everyone at that time said it would have been impossible for the railway to have been made, and for California to have made the progress it had, but for Chinese labour. If the accusations made against the Chinese had been true British Columbia would not have admitted them in the numbers they had done. If they were such a dreadful people as they were said to be objection would be taken to them there. The fact was that they had raised the standard of labour and efficiency wherever they had been. There was no question in South Africa of ousting white men from the occupations in which they were now engaged. The proposals under consideration only affected unskilled labour in mines, which could not and, he said boldly, ought not to be done by white men. When he visited Johannesburg the first thing he learned was that there was an enormous amount of gold to be dug out of the earth. It was no exaggeration to say that there were hundreds of millions waiting to be dug out. When a friend gave him this information and showed him figures, he asked "Well, what is England to get out of this?" His friend asked what part of England he was interested in. He suggested the case of his constituents in South Staffordshire. He was then shown mines where excellent machinery made by Messrs. Tangye in his own constituency was working successfully. He was told that the demand for machinery of that description was capable of enormous expansion, and that in the case of a great development of mining in South Africa millions of money would be spent on other Staffordshire productions, such as iron and brass work, saddlery, silver and electro-plate, jewellery, etc. But this development depended almost entirely on the supply of labour. He had asked his friend why there was a difficulty about labour, and he was informed that mines producing a small proportion of gold to the quantity of material treated could not pay a very large amount in wages, and it was absolutely necessary that those white men who were employed should be paid good wages. To live in comfort a white man ought to earn at least £20 a month. To do away with the prosperity of the gold mines was to injure the employment of white men in other industries, such as coal-mining and agriculture. They were told that there was a considerable output from the mines at the present time. He admitted that; but they were working the rich surface reefs, which were not expensive to develop, and not difficult to work. It would not be long before these surface reefs would be worked out; and if unskilled labour was not to be employed, who was to develop the deep-level mines? It cost £500,000 sterling to bring a deep level mine to the producing stage, and if capital was discouraged from investing in these deep-level mines, the whole prosperity of South Africa would come to an end. From the common-sense and economic point of view, the employment of Chinese labour was the best thing that could happen. It should be remembered that the Chinaman, if not treated fairly, would not work, because there was no mule in the world more obstinate than the Chinaman when he thought he was not getting his rights. The regulations provided that the Chinese labourers were not to be treated harshly. The experiment was to be carried out, not in a remote portion of the world, but by our own compatriots in the full light of day, with a vigilant Press looking on.

Now what reason was there to think that the responsible managers of the mines were not going to treat the Chinese labourers fairly? He knew that there were some people like hon. Gentlemen opposite, who thought that when a man went to the Colonies he became a combination of knave and fool. His experience in the Colonies was that a colonial, or an Englishman who had gone there, was just as capable of managing his own business as anyone in this country. The managers were most anxious to make the experiment a success, and to do this they must treat the Chinamen well. There were collected at Johannesburg perhaps the most capable mining engineers and mining managers in the whole world. Some of them were Americans, some French and German, and a great many English. Between them they knew all about the working of all the gold mines in the world, and even before the war their attention was turned very closely to the question of supply of labour. If in all those years they had been unable to find any other solution of the problem than the employment of Chinese labour, the extreme probability was that no better solution was to be found. We had spent enormous sums of money in South Africa; we had now the opportunity to get some of it back, and that could be done by securing well-paid employment for our young men; the more coloured labour there was employed the more openings there would be for these young men, and South Africa was capable of providing a magnificent market for articles manufactured in this country. These were legitimate ways of getting back some of the money expended in the war. He believed that the employment of Chinese labour would be good for this country, for the Transvaal, and for the Chinaman, and therefore he would have no hesitation in voting against the Amendment.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said he had no doubt that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was persuaded that the introduction of Chinese labour in the Transvaal would be advantageous to that part of our possessions. The hon. Member who commenced the debate that afternoon complained that the mover and the seconder of the Amendment had not given due consideration to the views held by the majority of the Legislative Council. He had listened very carefully to the able and interesting speeches of the mover and seconder, and it had struck him that they had paid all the respect that was due to the majority of the Legislative Council, having regard to the way in which the Council had been constituted. It was not a representative authority in any way, as the hon. Gentleman well knew, and the verdict of the majority of that Council on this question could not be taken as representing the views of the white population of the Transvaal. Until the Government took some steps to ascertain clearly and indisputably the views of the white population of the Transvaal on this question, he and his friends, at all events, could not be satisfied with the conclusion at which they had arrived. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that he intended to speak and to vote for what he considered the best interests of the colony, the responsibility of the Government of which we had taken upon ourselves. He had listened very carefully to the hon. Member's speech, and it struck him that the hon. Gentleman regarded the best interests of the colony as based upon the introduction of slavery, or what he would prefer to call a low standard of civilisation. He was aware that the noble Lord the Member for Bedfordshire took exception to the use of the term "slavery," as applied to the introduction of Chinese into South Africa, and he asked the question, "What is slavery?" The noble Lord went on to define slavery as "the condition of a man who is bound to another man for life." Well, he should like to put forward a better definition of slavery than that of the noble Lord. He defined it as "the suppression of individual liberty and freedom of action," and it mattered nothing to him whether the suppression of individual freedom and liberty of action was merely for a limited period or for the whole course of the man's natural existence, it was still slavery.

There could be no doubt that the Amendment brought them face to face with what was, after all, a very serious problem. The Government undoubtedly had made up their minds, so far as they were concerned, to sanction this Ordinance, and practically to give to the authorities in the Transvaal the power to introduce Chinese labour into that colony. Now, they had been told, again and again during the war in South Africa that the Government were powerless, however much they might desire it, to offer terms of surrender to the Boers without the consent of our colonial fellow-subjects, who had made such sacrifices with us in the interests of the Empire. They were told also, again and again, that the Government could not disclose the terms of settlement after the war without having regard to colonial opinion. Now, if the opinion of our colonial fellow subjects was of such weighty importance as the Government held it to be at that time, why did they now ignore colonial sentiment and feeling in a matter of this kind, which vitally affected the interests of the whole Empire. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight, emphasised the fact that the opinions of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Cape Colony were dead against the action which the Government were likely to take in reference in the Ordinance. With the permission of the House he should like to read the terms of a cablegram sent in December last by the Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth, Mr. Deakin, to the Secretary of the Anti-Asiatic League in Cape Town. Mr. Deakin cabled—

> "Unofficially replying your cable am now able to assure you that the Australian policy of exclusion of coloured aliens re-endorsed yesterday by great majority at the general election."

That cable was read to a mass meeting in Cape Town of between 3,000 and 4,000 inhabitants. A cable was also read from the First Commissioner of Customs in the Commonwealth, dated Adelaide, which stated,

> "Red hot sympathy with the movement."

viz., the movement to prevent the introduction of Asiatic labour into the Transvaal. The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Clare referred to the communication from the Prime Minister of New Zealand. Its text had not yet been communicated to the House and he should like to read it. It was as follows—

> "From the right hon. Richard Seddon. I earnestly hope, in the true interests of South Africa, that the movement for the introduction of Asiatic labour will not succeed. If this were to be the result of the great sacrifices made, it would cause heart-burnings and feelings of wide-spread disappointment. No Asiatic can enter this Colony without paying £100. Speaking as one knowing the Chinese on the gold fields of Australia and New Zealand, I assert they are no use in underground work, and prove undesirable colonists in every sense of the word."

Then there was a telegram from the Trades Council of Johannesburg which stated—

> "Labour union in the Transvaal unanimously oppose introduction of Asiatics."

An attempt was made on behalf of the Trades Council to hold a meeting at Johannesburg to protest against the introduction of the Chinese, but the capitalists organised a strong band of roughs at 15s. per head to break it up. As a result they appealed to their fellow citizens at the Cape to assist them in their endeavour to prevent the introduction of Asiatic labour. Why was the House of Commons asked to sanction this slavery Ordinance? Having regard to the restrictions which it was proposed to impose on the freedom of action of the Chinese, he thought they were justly entitled to regard the Ordinance as a slavery Ordinance. They were told by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth that the reason they were asked to sanction the Ordinance was that the gold mines could not be worked without the introduction of cheap labour. He denied that. But even if it were so, he wished to ask how far the Government intended to carry that principle. There were industries in this country that were suffering seriously, some of them only barely making ends meet, others temporarily working at a loss. If those industries could have the assistance of the Government in obtaining cheap labour they would regard it as a godsend. Were the Government about to extend their policy to this country? They would not dare to do it. He denied that there was a shortage of white unskilled labour in the Transvaal. If the mine-owners were prepared to pay fair wages that labour would be forthcoming at once.

The war in South Africa was a miners' war in some respects, but he was in a position to say that the miners in the Transvaal were not opposing the employment of white unskilled labour. Their opposition was devoted entirely to the introduction of unskilled Chinese labour. He could assure the Colonial Secretary that letters had been regularly received at the offices of the Miners' Union in Newcastle, from friends who went to South Africa, and on whose words they could rely just as implicitly as the right hon. Gentleman relied on the word of his advisers in the Transvaal. Those letters stated that the hostility of the miners was not to the employment of unskilled white labour, but to the employment of Asiatic labour.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked what about the hostility to white labour in the Ferreira Mine.

*MR. FENWICK said that the hon. Gentleman might possess some special information about that particular mine, but his information from the miners who went to South Africa and on whose word he could rely was as he had stated. At a mass meeting at Cape Town a distinguished citizen who had been in South Africa for twenty years gave some examples to show that there was a good supply of white unskilled labour in South Africa. He said that the De Beers mine wanted over 15,000 extra natives and they had not the slightest difficulty in getting them. The reason being that the conditions of employment were favourable. Only the other day he himself was told that there was one mine in Matabeleland which was never short of labour, because the manager dealt fairly and honestly with the natives and discharged any of his white employees who illtreated them. Again, at Cape Town there was no difficulty in getting native labour for the Docks, but in East London there was the greatest difficulty, the reason being that the wages offered in East London was only 2s. 6d. per day, whereas in Cape Town it was 4s. That clearly showed that where reasonable remuneration was given there was very little difficulty indeed in getting this native labour. Towards the close of the late unhappy war supporters of the Government pointed out to the working classes in this country what a happy hunting ground South Africa would be for the British labourer, and what a splendid outlet it would be for the surplus population of this country. Now it turned out that this country had shed the blood of tens of thousands of its subjects not in the interests of British labour but in the interests of Chinese labour. [AN HON. MEMBER: And the Millionaires.] Yes, both of those classes. Ships were chartered to send troops to South Africe and it seemed to him they would have to charter more ships to bring back the British unemployed from South Africa. The views of those who might be taken to represent the minds of the millionaires of Park Lane indicated that this was really a question of wages and fair conditions of employment. Mr. Lionel Phillips, in a letter to *The Times* about twelve months ago, said—

> "The refuse and wastrels of this country we will not have at any price, because at sixpence a day they would be dear. Your good honest workmen we cannot afford."

What an idea! He would have thought that if anybody could afford to pay fair wages for good honest British labour it was the millionaires who were interested in the mines of South Africa. But underlying this agitation there was also the fear that, if white labour were employed to any considerable extent, trades unions or organisations would be formed to the annoyance of the mine-owners. The "trail of the serpent" referred to in the memorandum presented by the mining industry to the ex-Colonial Secretary in January of last year at Johannesburg was the formation of labour unions. The mine-owners were afraid their profits would be interfered with; hence this agitation. It was for this that we had spent millions of treasure and sacrificed thousands of lives, that wives had been made widows, and children left fatherless—that we might further increase the huge dividends of the men of Park Lane who held this Government in the hollow of their hand. Throughout this agitation the Government had been in the hands of the financiers of London and the Transvaal, and they appeared to be utterly incapable of extricating themselves from the mercenary spell which these men had woven around them. From his knowledge of the working classes of the country he was convinced that if this issue alone was placed before them there would be a speedy clearing out of the Party opposite. He heartily supported the Amendment, believing the Government were about to take a step which would introduce a moral cancer into the social life of the Transvaal, a step fraught with grave danger to the best interests of the Colony, and a step which Members would probably live to regret.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln) said he did not wish to make any appeal to sentiment or to opposition to Chinese labour in itself. He appreciated the gravity of the situation in South Africa, and the fact that we had evidence tending to show there was a shortage of labour, and that Lord Milner and others believed it was necessary for the country that fresh sources of supply should be found. One of the gravest elements in the question was the objection to the introduction of Chinese which undoubtedly existed in our Colonies, and the fact that in taking the action proposed we should be acting contrary to the sentiments of all the Colonies which had had any experience of Chinese labour. His principal reason for rising was to ask the Government to delay taking action and to give the country time to consider the question from the point of view, not particularly of the labour being Asiatic, but mainly of the actual regulations to be imposed. Everybody who read those regulations would agree that, although the Colonial Secretary was doubtless perfectly satisfied that anything in the nature of slavery would be prevented, it did not quite appear on the face of the Ordinance that that end would be secured. On the contrary there were grave reasons for fearing that something of the kind would result. There had been an unfortunate incident in the debate. Would anybody have expected that in the twentieth century an hon. Member would have stood up to defend and praise the old slave trade in the Southern States of America? Yet that had happened in the debate, for the hon. Member for Leicester had stated that the slave trade in the Southern States of America had been a great economical advantage to that country and to the world.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON explained that what he said was that the old and earlier methods were much to be deplored. He did not in any way praise them, although the economical results were advantageous.

MR. SEELY said he was in the recollection of the House. No doubt the hon. Member did not intend to praise or defend the slave trade, but that only showed what happened when Members got talking on the subject. What the hon. Member said was that the slave trade had been an advantage to those countries, and that the Southern States of America and the cotton trade could not have been properly developed had it not been for the slave trade. That a Member of the House should have made such a statement was an incident which could not have given much pleasure to the Colonial Secretary in whose defence the speech was made.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON: May I say that I am not afraid even in this House to state a fact which is historically true?

MR. SEELY said they might differ as to the statement and still more as to its historical truth. According to the proposed regulations, if one of these men thought he would like to live outside the "Chinese village" and bought a house for his wife and family to live in, he would be liable to heavy punishment, and the person selling the house would be fined £500 or imprisoned for two years. Then there was the following clause—

> "Any person who shall harbour or conceal any labourer who has deserted from the service of his importer, or who has committed any breach of this Ordinance, or who should aid and abet any labourer to desert as aforesaid, will be liable to a fine not exceeding £50, and, in default of payment, to imprisonment not exceeding three months."

The old theory for which we had fought in the past, had been that British soil was free, and that every Englishman was free to protect any slave who ran to him. He asked whether it would not be well to give the House a little more time to consider how this evil might be avoided. Only yesterday had there been published the correspondence of the Chinese Minister with regard to these regulations. The Chinese Minister had made certain suggestions or alterations, one of which was—

> "That the person styled 'the importer' shall be a *bonâ fide* employer of labour, and not a mere dealer or speculator in labour; and that the transfer or assignment of the labourer to another employer shall only be made with the consent of the immigrant and the approval of the Consul or Consular Agent of his country."

The Chinese Minister was a heathen and they were Christians and this was a Christian country, and yet he went on to say—

> "This is necessary in order to prevent the immigrant from being made a mere chattel or article of commerce."

He was aware that the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary was prepared to put something of that kind into this regulation, but at any rate there was this justification for the Chinese Minister's suggestion, that in the first Ordinance the consent of the Chinese labourer was struck out. Did not the right hon. Gentleman think that, under the circumstances, it would be far wiser for him to allow the House to see the whole of these regulations and the correspondence before he asked it to pledge itself in any way to this Ordinance. As it stood without the regulations the Ordinance was slavery, and nothing more nor less. [Mr. LYTTELTON dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman did not acknowledge that; all he could say was the Chinese Minister thought it so, and we certainly ought to go one better than the Chinese Minister; he therefore begged the Colonial Secretary and the Government to give an assurance to the House that this matter should not be considered finally at an end when the vote was given that evening, but would say that the Chinese should not be brought into the Transvaal until sufficient time had been given to enable the people to thoroughly understand the conditions under which they were to be employed. The correspondence with the Chinese Ministers was a very important element in this matter. It was a very serious thing for a Minister to write about making his people "chattels and articles of commerce," he therefore hoped sufficient time would be allowed to consider all the aspects of the case.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND, as a matter of personal explanation and in justification of the statement which he made in the course of his speech, said: In the library I find in the share register of the British South Africa Company of 6th July, 1895, under the number on the register 10,056, the following statement—

> "5,000 shares—Lord A. F. Compton and Edmund Venables."

I think, in view of that, the noble Lord has placed me in a wrong light in saying he did not possess any shares.

Lord ALWYNE COMPTON: I apologise for trespassing on the House, but as the hon. Member for Clare has challenged me, I think I have a right of reply. It now appears that the hon. Member has referred to shares which he says were held in my name nine years ago. The hon. Member really should investigate these things before he makes statements of this kind. Nine years ago I was a member of a firm which I do not belong to now, and I believe it is quite possible that 5,000 or 10,000 Chartered shares may have stood at that time in the name of my partner and myself. They were not my shares, I did not possess them, and neither I nor my partner had any power over them.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: With great respect I submit that the noble Lord does not accurately describe the situation. I made the statement that he possessed shares, and his name for a number of shares is now on the register of the Chartered Company. I think, in the mind of every fair-minded man in the House, that would justify me in making the statement.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said that it was not the duty of the Government to consider the interests of the mine-owners or the immediate economic problem, but the interests of what it was hoped would be a great English Colony. All the greatest authorities who had written on South Africa had agreed that it was to the mineral wealth of South Africa that they must look for the development of a colonial free-governed State, and that agriculture, despite the richness and fertility of the soil, could not operate as a magnetic influence in drawing an English population to that point of the world. In establishing Chinese labour, therefore, they would be striking a blow at colonial development by British people. Was it not possible to work these mines with British labour? If there were no Chinese and no blacks would there not be reef prospecting with as much energy as that which characterised Australian mining? If that were so, the Colonial Secretary would be abrogating his responsibility as a Colonial Minister if he allowed Chinese labour to intercept the natural flow of British labour, merely for the purpose of precipitating the development of the mines. Why not employ Indian labour? No doubt the real reason was to be found in the fact that the Indian Legislative Council would not for a moment tolerate further development of the coolie legislation which was enacted with great reluctance some years ago. Another reason, no doubt, was the objection of the Indian people to an Ordinance framed under such conditions. Looking at the nature of the contract the Chinese would have to sign, there was no doubt it amounted to a reinstitution of the system of slavery. He knew of no parallel to this Ordinance in any legislation. It was a singular fact that under the Ordinance it was competent for the mine-owner to inflict corporal punishment upon these unhappy Chinese. That was the opinion of the Chinese Minister. He himself did not wish to take up an attitude of bigoted hostility to the mine-owners of South Africa. Many of them were liberal minded men, but he recollected that before the war broke out, and while it was being waged, this country was told that the colony would be a magnificent field for Britsh labour. There was a large number of unemployed in this country, but this Ordinance would shut the door against them, and put in their place the most debased form of labour which could possibly be instituted in any country under the sun. He hoped, therefore, the Government would reconsider their position, and see whether they could not solve the problem with not so much regard for the immediate interests of the mine-owners but in the permanent and lasting interests of both this country and South Africa.

Mr. WILLIAM WATSON RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said he wished to say a few words on this subject from an entirely English point of view. At Liverpool they had 25,000 casual labourers, and there was only work for

13,000. The result was that each casual labourer got on the average two and a half to three days work every week. This was a cause of very great demoralisation. When a man left his house in the morning to seek work his wife and children did not know whether there would be a crust of bread to eat during the day. This caused such evils as overcrowding, intemperance, disease, and vice of all kinds. At least 2,500 of these casual labourers could be easily spared from Liverpool, and he believed they would go to South Africa if they had terms such as 4s. per day and regular work. He did not believe the work in the mines was any more difficult or objectionable than the work these men had to do in Liverpool. If they had facilities for getting to South Africa they would, he thought, be willing to go there. A scheme of this kind would be of incalculable advantage to every large city and town in this country. It would benefit the men and it would benefit their families, and they could look forward to improvement in years to come. He was very grieved to hear that there were suggestions that any man who went out to this employment would have to abandon any hope of social improvement, and entirely confine himself to work of this particular kind. Workmen going out from this country to take up this work would look forward to improving their social position. He did not think the illustration of the 1,000 navvies sent out from this country was a fair one. They were sent out to emergency work on railways, and they expected emergency terms. He simply wanted to know whether any efforts had been made to recruit labour in this country for that portion of His Majesty's dominions which appeared to be crying out for labour. He would like to know what attempts in that direction had been made, if any; and, if no efforts had been made, why some attempt should not be made before importing Chinese labour. He believed that the great working centres of this country would want to know why something was not being done for them before we imported Chinese labour into the Transvaal, and that the general sense of this country would object to the importation of that labour, and would only assent to it in the last resort when they were sati fied that reasonable and practical solutions had been fairly tried and failed.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had pointed to the weak point in connection with the labour inquiry. The reference to the Commission which inquired into the subject was exceedingly restricted. It restricted the inquiry to the point—of how many blacks could be obtained in a certain region in Africa? But there were three colours that could be employed in the mines—white, black, and yellow. The white and yellow were both excluded from the inquiry, and many hon. Members who sympathised with the difficulties which the Government were confronted with in South Africa at the conclusion of the war, were determined that they would do nothing to hamper, as they believed, the employment of white labour until the question of the employment of that labour had been thoroughly gone into. The right hon. Gentleman made an appeal to some of them on this side of the House in the earlier portion of the debate on the King's Speech to give support to the Government. But the Imperial thinking of the Government led it in very various directions. We had been invited to reverse our fiscal policy in order that certain advantages might be conferred on South Africa and our other Colonies. We were now asked to reverse the labour policy of this country in order to make South Africa properous. What he could not understand was why, at the very time we were asked to exorcise the demon of cheapness in this country, we should be at the same time invited to introduce it into the Transvaal in the shape of Chinese labour.

The House had heard about the opinion of the Tranvaal, and the right hon. Gentleman in his speech, in which he endeavoured to make a great many obscure parts of the question plain, objected to any doubt being cast upon the independence of the votes of the officials of the Transvaal upon the Legislative Council. If the right hon. Gentleman's contention held good they might as well abolish the House of Commons, because that assumed that a civil servant being placed on a legislative body was able to do the whole work not merely of administration but of legislation.

Admirable as might be the character of the great Civil Service in the Transvaal, he would never accept the view that they could give as independent and as free a vote as the representatives of the people. He could not accept the view, therefore, that there was not great need for the real opinion of the Transvaal being taken upon the question. If they could not get that by representative institutions the only other way of getting it was by a plebiscite. He could not accept the view that there would not have been plenty of time to have taken a plebiscite if it were still impossible to provide representative institutions in South Africa. He believed it was impossible without adequate inquiry—and that they had not yet had—to support any scheme for pouring unlimited Chinese, married or otherwise, into the mines of the Rand. It was urged that Chinese cheap labour was to encourage the growth of the white population in South Africa, but that was not the view of those parts of the Empire which had tried it. The whole Empire had been united against the proposal to employ Chinese labour. As the right hon. Gentleman had appealed to them to vote Imperially, he would appeal to him in turn to think well before he went against the whole sense of the Empire in importing this cheap labour into South Africa. It was said by a distinguished Member of this House who sat on the other side, and who was no longer with them, that the trail of finance was over the Raid. At any rate, let them make sure that the trail of finance was not over the settlement after the war. It was inevitable, if they took no means of satisfying themselves of what the real opinion of the Transvaal was, that, without representative institutions, and without a plebiscite, the opinion of the mine-owners would bear undue weight with the Government of the country. It was inevitable that the mine-owners and their dependents must exercise undue weight and influence in the consideration of Transvaal policy. He, at any rate, had not sought to shirk any responsibility in supporting what he believed to be British rights in South Africa, and he for one deplored this policy, which he did not think could be justified, and which he thought they were asked to approve on very insufficient data.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said he had listened to the debate with very great interest, and the first thing he would remark was that it was sometimes hard to say where private interests ended and the public interest began. He would, to the best of his ability, protest against this Ordinance, because he believed it to be the slave policy of a slavish and mammonised Government. Would the Colonial Secretary state whether he was the official inferior of Lord Milner, or whether Lord Milner was the official inferior of him? Who was the master and who was the man? Was the master away in the Transvaal and was the man here? It was a very curious thing that when the late Colonial Secretary was in office no slave policy was instituted although Lord Milner was as anxious to institute it then as now. The present Colonial Secretary was carrying out Lord Milner's policy.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [16th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained' "—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said this was one of those occasions which only occurred once or twice in a Parliamentary lifetime when a Member considered it one of his greatest privileges to address the House of Commons. He now lifted up his voice to protest against the violation, contained in this Ordinance, of all the Parliamentary traditions which made this country great, and which made it a refuge for the weak and the oppressed. When the House automatically adjourned he was asking the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary who in this case was the master; he, the right hon. Gentleman, or his official subordinate, Lord Milner. He had come to the conclusion that, with regard to this slave policy, Lord Milner was the prime mover. It was unfortunate that the Colonial Secretary should have leapt at one bound to his present position and more unfortunate still, that he should have as his official subordinate a person of the somewhat unscrupulous character of Lord Milner, who was controlled and dominated in this slave policy by the millionaires of South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman was appointed to the Colonial Office when Lord Milner had declined that position which the Prime Minister had begged him to accept in a manner hardly worthy of himself. Lord Milner then went to South Africa, and a gentleman very well known at the Bar, but not very well known in this House, was set up here as his mouthpiece. He did not wish to say anything unamiable in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman, but if he said that, in this case, he was a creature of Lord Milner's he was not very far wrong; if he said that Lord Milner himself was the creature of the millionaire capitalists of South Africa he was very much in the right. The hon. Member for the Stowmarket Division who spoke first in the debate that afternoon, had made use of an observation which had started him on a train of thought. The hon. Member for Stowmarket drew attention to the fact that when the House assembled, and before public business commenced, and before Mr. Speaker took the chair, we had prayers and thanksgiving to Almighty God, and a prayer that we might arrive at our conclusions without fear, favour, or misgiving. Those words were spoken by a dignitary of the Church, whose voice they loved to hear, and whose grandfather was the great slave emancipator. When William Wilberforce stood up in this House at the time of the Union and demanded the emancipation of the slaves he did not get a voice to support him, but when seven years later, after the Union was effected, he carried the Emancipation Act he carried it with the help of an Irish majority, and he (Mr. MacNeill) was proud to belong to a nation which had always been found ready to fight on the side of freedom and humanity. The Transvaal was a new colony and new colonies he always noticed were given mottoes. In 1858 when our Indian Dependency became a British Dependency they took for their motto "Heaven be our guide" and that motto was fulfilled when the right hon. Gentleman opposite became Secretary of State for India. He now thought of presenting to the Colonial Secretary a motto for the Transvaal. The right hon. Gentleman was a scholar and came from a family of scholars and he would have given him the motto in Latin, but for the benefit of the House he would give it in the vulgar tongue. The motto for this colony, in view of this slave Ordinance, should be "The smell of gain from any source is sweet."

He had endeavoured, unsuccessfully no doubt because he was not acute Parliamentarian enough, to get a disorderly Question past the Clerk at the Table, to elucidate this matter for the benefit of the House. He would now say this, that Lord Milner, not personally, but officially, was and must necessarily be, very much influenced in his capacity as administrator of South Africa by capitalist considerations. The late Mr. Rhodes made a will. In this will there was a disposition of £14,000,000, £7,000,000 were invested in Transvaal mines. Lord Milner was one of the executors and trustees under that will. If Lord Milner did not regard the welfare of the mines he would be disregarding the trusts of Mr. Rhodes' will. First of all he was a great administrator in which capacity he had to lower rents and see that there was a living wage for the white man. Then as executor of

Mr. Rhodes' will, it was his duty to raise rents, and join hands with the capitalists of South Africa. Lord Milner had every possible defect there could be in a Governor. He was associated by sympathy and by interest as executor of Mr. Rhodes with Transvaal mines. In consequence he was carrying on his Ministry in South Africa not in favour of the poor but of the rich, not in favour of the British working man but of the Park Lane millionaire. He recollected the cheers that greeted the mover of the Amendment, when, in his masterly speech, he pointed out how the effect of the importation of the Chinese labourer would be to keep out of the Transvaal English, Scotch, and Irish working men, and asked, "Is this what we get for the war?" Henry Grattan always said—

> "I never argue with a prophet because I always disbelieve him."

He was a poor successor of a great Hebrew prophet, but he remembered four years previously making a prophecy with regard to the South African war and what it meant, and being greatly rejoiced when *The Times* the next day had a stinging article on "The Calumnies of Mr. Swift MacNeill." Those words of four years ago were fulfilled because, as everybody knew in their hearts, they were true, but he was much rejoiced when he saw the tons of ink expended by the yellow-press scribblers in abuse of him, and when he became the theme of every Jingo drunkard in every Jingo music hall. During the course of the debate it had been clearly seen that the great contest going on between the Members of the Treasury Bench and the opposite side of the House was as to which of two trails should lay over South Africa. The Treasury Bench said the trail of finance should have the advantage, while those upon the Opposition side said that the trail of trades unionism, which gave everybody an equal opportunity of earning a fair wage, should be the dominant factor. The great secret of the immortality of Shakespeare was that he saw that the methods of the base were the same from age to age; that he saw that men were affected by the same passions in all ages, that despite the march of civilisation men were affected by the same aspirations, the same passions, the same vices, as they were in the days of old; and when he saw, in the course of this debate, the motives which guided the actions of men, he was constrained to say that they were the same which led to the Irish Members being brought to this House by the Act of Union. He had stated, so far as he could, in succinct language, the condition of Johannesburg today when Lord Milner was in full power—

> "The one desire of the people of Johannesburg was to maintain their independence and preserve their public liberty without which life was not worth living. The Government denied them this and violated the national sense of Englishmen at every turn."

Was that true? He thought so, but when those words were written they were regarded as being as false as the Piggott forgeries. He took that extract from "the women and children's letter" at the time of the Jameson Raid. That was the means by which the war was begun and by which they came to the present state of things.

His hon. friend the Member for the Stowmarket Division had said that, in this matter of Chinese labour, he had the courage of his convictions and was prepared to face his constituents. A more noted person, the hon. Member for Dulwich, although he had said nothing of the kind, had taken an even stronger course, because, in a placard a copy of which was shown in the lobby on the previous day and with which his constituency was placarded, he said—

> "If anybody says that Dr. Rutherfoord Harris will vote for Chinese labour in the Transvaal it is a lie."

It was to the highest degree repellent and abhorrent to civilised men that any human being, however debased he might be, should, for the sake of metallic gain to others, be placed in a degraded position. These imported Chinese labourers would be placed in that position. This Ordinance was one of the most shocking documents that had ever emanated from the brain of man, and he had no hesitation in saying that the condition of these Chinese labourers under the British law would be degrees more horrible than the condition of slavery which existed in the old days. Above all, there was one thing in the Ordinance which, in the debate, had not been brought out so clearly as it might have been. These men were to be allowed to acquire no property and to have no power of bettering themselves, they were to be as machines, and what was more, it was supported from that Treasury Bench in this Christian and Bible-loving England, where Biblical expressions and quotations rose spontaneously to our lips, in this Christian England which boasted of thirty generations of Christian children—they were told by the Treasury Bench that one of the conditions, in the regulations, was to be that these men were to have idols of brass made in Birmingham from whence many a foul fetish had come before for worship. Some of the most devoted of public men that he had ever known had suffered martyrdom in their desire to spread Christianity in China. What would our successors say if we allowed these poor Chinese to have brass idols made in Birmingham, for the purposes of worship, in order to give more money to Messrs. Beit and Eckstein and Swindleheim and Co. The first debate on the Address had been a fiscal debate, the second had been a slavery debate. He had made his protest; he was thankful he had had the privilege to do so. He had been eighteen years in this House and God forbid that if he lived another eighteen years and was here at the time when any such question as this arose again, he should not rise in his place and protest to the uttermost against such a course as was now proposed to be taken.

*MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said it was absolutely superfluous for him to defend Lord Milner, whose great public services were universally recognised, from the attacks of the hon. Member for Donegal. He ventured to think that hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on the other side of the House had ignored, or had taken insufficient account of, two important factors in this problem. The first was the resolution of the Bloemfontein Conference in March of last year. Those gentlemen who talked about hurry and hustle on the part of the Government seemed to think that nothing had been done in South Africa before the Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council. He asked permission to read the resolution on the native question passed by that Conference on 19th March, 1903, which showed how definite the opinion was in South Africa—

> "That this Conference, after considering all available statistics, and hearing the reports of the highest official authorities of the several States, has come to the conclusion that the native population of Africa south of the Zambesi does not comprise a sufficient number of adult males, capable of work, to satisfy the normal requirements of the several colonies, and at the same time furnish an adequate amount of labour for the large mining centres. Under these circumstances, it is evident to the Conference that the opening up of new sources of labour supply is requisite in the interests of all the South African States."

Who were the members of that Conference? They consisted of delegates and advisers from all the four colonies in South Africa—self-governing and Crown colonies delegates and advisers from Rhodesia, and one delegate from Portuguese East Africa, Mr. Lencastre. The resolution was passed, as he had said, on 19th March last, and no protest was entered to show that any individual dissented from its conclusions. [AN HON. MEMBER: Did they recommend Chinese labour?] They recommended sources of labour other than African. What was the inference from that? He passed from that point to the point raised by the hon. Member for Clare, who said that the labour representatives would soon demonstrate what a cruel, heartbreaking, miserable thing this scheme for introducing Chinese labour into South Africa was. Well, the House had listened with respect and attention to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Wansbeck Division, who said that he had received information from many persons, who had gone from Northumberland to the Transvaal, stating that they were against Chinese labour. But, at all events, the reports from the Transvaal were not by any means unanimous. He held in his hand a newspaper called the *Labour Leader*, which, he believed, was the organ of the Labour Representation Committee.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said, as a matter of right, he wished to state that the *Labour Leader* never was the organ of, and did not represent, the Labour Representation Committee It was his personal property, and under his own charge.

*MR. MOON said that the *Labour Leader* was, as the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil stated, edited by him at all events and he was assisted by two gentlemen, Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, who, he believed, were Labour candidates. That paper, brought out under these auspices, contained the following sentences in an article called—

> "'The Socialist Outlook in the Transvaal,' by 'Our Rand Correspondent':—'A large portion of the Uitlander working class regard the Labour Party's cheap white remedy as far worse than the Chinese disease.'"

The other sentence he would read was more material and important, and appeared under the sub-title—

> "'Chinese, or low paid whites'. We have what is probably the larger portion of Rand working men in favour of Chinese for unskilled work."

and further down, the writer continued—

> "The average miner rather prefers to be safe from competition by having Chinese, under legislative enactment, than by having a huge number of unskilled whites, gradually becoming skilled, to step into his shoes."

He thought he had shown that the Labour Party was not agreed on this question.

He came now to his second point. He thought that his right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary must have satisfied everyone on that side of the House, except the hon. and gallant Member for Isle of Wight, that South Africa was not a white man's country. [AN HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL BENCHES: No.] Well, at all events it was not a white man's country in the same sense that the United States or our own Colonies of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand were white men's countries. If any hon. Member doubted that, he would quote Mr. Moor, Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, and one of the delegates of Natal to the Conference in Bloemfontein, whose resolution he had recited. That Gentleman stated that in South Africa the coloured population was six to one of white men, in his own colony the proportion was still greater, viz., ten to one. It was true that in South Africa there were one or two dying races, the Hottentots and Bushmen, but the situation in other respects was far different from that in the United States, where the red man was now practically extinct, from Australia where the Aborigines were practically extinct, and from New Zealand where the Maoris were fast going. In South Africa every variety of the Bantu tribes seemed to increase in proximity to the white races at the most astonishing rate. The rate was not less rapid than that of the negroes in the United States. If that were so, they could never expect to have South Africa a white man's country, in the sense that New Zealand and Australia were white men's countries. What of India? India was not a white man's country, although it was the brightest jewel in the crown of England, and many Englishmen went there to work. South Africa was, in regard to black and coloured labour in an intermediate position between India on the one hand and Australia on the other. But it was an essential factor in the problem that the supply of labour was insufficient. Already additional labour had been brought into the country from India. Why draw a distinction between black labour and yellow labour? He believed that there was a suggestion that Indian labour in Natal was regarded by the inhabitants in that colony as unsatisfactory; but if hon. Gentlemen would refer to the report of the Bloemfontein Conference they would see that the Prime Minister of Natal, Sir Albert Hime, moved a Resolution to the following effect—

> "That in the opinion of this Conference the permanent settlement in South Africa of Asiatic races would be injurious, and should not be permitted; but that, if industrial development positively requires it, the introduction of unskilled Asiatic labourers, under a system of Government control providing for the indenturing of such labourers and their repatriation at the termination of their indentures, should be permissible."

An Amendment was proposed to that resolution which began—

> "That this Conference is of opinion that South Africa is essentially a white man's country,"

but it was abandoned and merged in the resolution, which he had quoted at the outset, in regard to the introduction of non-African labour. Could anything be clearer than that? Even in South Africa it was fully recognised that it was not a white man's country. [AN HON. MEMBER: Is that Lord Milner's view?] He did not know, he was only concerned with the fact that the Bloemfontein Conference, which was presided over by Lord Milner, passed the resolution he had read, and that it was recorded without protest. He now came to the last portion of the second point—"Were the Chinese worse than other people?" Perhaps he had seen as much of the Chinese people as most hon. Members in the House—in their own country, in San Francisco, and elsewhere—and he had seen no evidence to show that the Chinese were worse than any European or Asiatic nation. He would venture to refer to the opinion of a gentleman whom he had met on board a steamer, who for a long time was a member of the Legislative Council and a planter in a West Indian colony. That gentleman told him that in the province of Demerara the Chinese formed an excellent part of the population, that they were superior to other immigrants, that they were orderly and well conducted, and that they equipped and maintained their Christian churches better than the other members of the community. He would quote another great authority, the celebrated American missionary to China, Dr. Wells Williams. That gentleman, who had lived forty-three years in China and wrote the standard book on China, entitled "The Middle Kingdom," said, after referring to the religious characteristics of Chinamen—

> "To these traits of Chinese character may be added the preservative features of their regard for parents and superiors, and their general peaceful industry. If there be any connection between the former of these virtues and the promise attached to the Fifth Commandment, 'That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,' then the long duration of the Chinese people and the Empire is a stupendous monument of the good effects of a partial obedience to the law of God by those who only, had it inscribed on their hearts, and not written in their hands."

He would give one other corroboration of the evidence as to the value and merit of the Chinese. Some twenty years ago Mr. Seward, bearing a name honoured among American statesmen, who subsequently became American Minister at Pekin, set himself to write a book on the effects of Chinese immigration into California, and bore testimony to the splendid work which the Chinese did in the mining towns of the Pacific slope. Their labour compared favourably with that of the Cornish miners. His hon. and gallant friend sitting behind him, who was intimately connected with Canada, had told him that many parts of Canada could not have been built up without the assistance of Chinese labour. It had been said that wherever Chinese had been introduced, the step had been followed by deplorable results; but that might be alleged of any place where men were herded together. The Colonial Secretary had told the House that statutory permission would be given for these men to bring their wives with them, and that would prevent any evil results following. Those who knew anything about China were aware that in China a man could only have one legal wife. There was some recognition of regularised concubines, but it was to be inferred that the Colonial Secretary would exclude these from the Transvaal. He ventured to express the belief that the provisions which had been made by way of safeguard would entirely obviate the evils which had been brought to his notice a few days ago, and which made him doubt whether he should vote on this occasion. The letter of the Bishop of Worcester to *The Times* and the speeches of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Rochester had made him regard this as a most serious matter, and he had gone so far as to tell one of the Whips that his vote could not be relied on on this occasion. However, he had gone into the matter very carefully, and he believed that there was no danger at all. He should vote for the Government. A gentleman in the Indian Civil Service told him how recruits were enlisted for the Assam tea gardens. They were led to believe that they would have good wages and an easy time; but when they went to Assam, they found that they had to sign a contract involving onerous conditions of which they had previously no idea. That would not be the case with the Chinese because a certificate would not be granted to the person importing them unless an officer were fully satisfied that they understood the conditions. He would vote for the Government because he believed that this movement need only be temporary, because it was urgently necessary, and because if they hampered or delayed the Government they would be retarding the development of an important part of the British Empire.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I will, with the permission of the House, state briefly the reasons for my vote, which I am indisposed to give silently. In passing, I should like to notice the peculiar position in which the House finds itself, this week, as contrasted with that of last week. Last week we were blamed for bringing a question before the House which necessarily involved a vote of want of confidence in the Government; now the same position, which then we were told was wrong, is forced on the House by the action of the Colonial Secretary. It was certainly understood at the commencement of this session that the House was to have what is called an independent opportunity of discussing this question upon its own merits—a question, I venture to say, which is one of the gravest which has been submitted to the House for a long series of years. For some reason or other the Government have come to the conclusion that the Party whip must be applied in this case, and that to this question must be superadded the question which we had to discuss last week, as to the confidence or want of confidence in His Majesty's present advisers. I am not going to argue the question on one side or the other. I admit it is a subject beset with difficulties, I admit that circumstances have arisen over which this House certainly has at present no control, circumstances, to which I will not refer as far as their past history is concerned, which confront us with serious economical difficulty in South Africa. I will not argue whether objections or arguments are well or ill-founded, I care not whether there can or cannot be obtained sufficient labour under existing circumstances, I care not whether the mines can be carried on at a profit or not. I venture to say that in my opinion (which is not perhaps worth very much), applying myself to the figures and history of the case, I do not believe in the assertion that the mines cannot be carried on at a profit unless recourse is had to the system now proposed. I think the House has to deal with this subject on a higher plane than on the question of what, in the next twelve months, the profits or the losses of the mining industry in South Africa may become, with respect to which one speaker, before the adjournment, told the House that there were hundreds of millions of pounds worth of gold available in this district. But the question on which I am going to ask the House to vote is—Whether they will sanction the introduction into one part of the King's dominions of slavery. We have heard a good deal in the last two or three years of the glories and the successes and the wonders of the nineteenth century, but I venture to think that Englishmen of to-day, and I am quite sure Englishmen of the future, will look back upon one act of the century as that of which English posterity may be for ever proud—the legislation under which this House and this country resolved, at what was then a great pecuniary sacrifice, to wipe out the stain and the blot and the crime of slavery from the whole British Empire. I think this is the first time since the great Act of 1833 was passed that we have been asked in the British House of Commons to sanction a system which is—I will not say the first step, but something beyond the first step—in the direction of the re-introduction of slavery in this Empire. I have heard arguments used to-night some derogatory to the character of the Chinese, and some commendatory of the character of the Chinese, but I put that on one side altogether—whether they are good or bad, whether the introduction of a people with their habits or vices would be a great disadvantage or a great advantage to the labour market in South Africa. But even if the Ordinance be modified by the regulations which the Colonial Secretary is to make, whatever form those regulations may take, these men are bound to be, in the words used, I think, by the Chinese Ambassador, goods and chattels. I care not whether the Chinese possess all the virtues or all the vices; they are men, and when they have gone into South Africa they will be the subjects of the British Crown, and under that rule, at all events until the present period, we have always been taught to believe that no slavery could exist, and that, as Lord Mansfield said, the very breath of air on British soil meant perfect freedom to all men.

Sir Henry Fowler.

We have heard a great deal as to what would be done if this were a self-governing colony. I submit that that is perfectly irrelevant. I think the British Parliament is not entitled to allow, and would have no moral justification for allowing, any colony which called itself a British colony to introduce slavery into its midst. The great American Republic was broken up on that ground. There you had independent States claiming their right to allow slavery, and certainly a good deal was to be said in favour of their claim from the constitutional standpoint. But, although these States were in a totally different position from any self-governing colony of ours, the great American people would not allow their independence to protect the institution of slavery; and the ultimate issue of the great war which took place in consequence, was the question of the existence or non-existence of slavery. We have this corresponding duty to all parts of our Empire. That is the ground on which I shall give my vote. I believe that among the very wise sayings of that wisest of statesmen and writers, Mr. Burke, one of the most pregnant and one which ought to be held supreme in this House and in the councils of those who guide it, was his declaration that—

> "Whatever is morally wrong can never be politically right."

I would put another point before I sit down. An hon. Member this evening encouraged us not to be afraid of what he called the terrors of the Episcopal or the Nonconformist conscience. Well, that hon. Member will find, and the Government and the House will find, that the Episcopal and the Nonconformist conscience constitute together a power in this country that cannot be ignored. We may depend upon it that, if this ill-timed and ill-advised measure is allowed to proceed with the sanction of the House of Commons, you will have turned over a new page in the history of this country and you will see the beginning of an agitation which will last for years, until this stain is wiped off our Statute-book. Looking forward to the future, as well as remembering the past, I would urge the House to put aside all this question of confidence or no confidence in the illustrious body of men who at present preside over the destinies of this country. Never mind whether they are the greatest or the wisest statesmen who ever lived; never mind matters which are mere trifles in comparison with what would be a lasting disgrace to the House of Commons and the country.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said that whether the House realised it or not, he believed, after thirteen years of Parliamentary experience, that this was the most momentous debate he had ever heard, and one which would probably mark an epoch in the relations between the Colonies and this country unless the Ordinance was revoked. In his judgment the debate raised a question of even greater importance than the question of the Jameson Raid or even the costly war which was created by the raid. Both the raid and the war were the result of wealth, and were the consequence of money taking the place of government, and commercial pro-consuls with German names governing Africa in the interest of the Jews. The question was whether or not they should again, in the history of the world, have human subjectiveness to money and human degradation in the interests of wealth, and whether this old country, which had its face towards the light more than any other country on God's earth, should tear up the charter of Wilberforce, and should, in the interests of the most profitable and most unscrupulously managed of any industry, revive slavery in some of its worst forms. When that issue was submitted to the British working man he promised that the Conservative workman in Liverpool, the Orange workman in Belfast, the Nationalist workman in Dublin, and the Tory workman in London would vote on this question without either politics or religion influencing their decision, and that they would sweep away every man on the Benches opposite who, at the instance of an unscrupulous gang of foreign capitalists, had made Lord Milner their tool and the Government their medium. The Ordinance connoted the corrupt influence of those capitalists whom Dr. Johnson must have had in his mind when he said that "patriotism was the last refuge of a scoundrel." It also denoted another milestone on the Jingo rake's progress. First it was protection, then it was prescription, and now it was slavery. He had spent his life in helping the poor, the unskilled and the unorganised in his own country, and, at the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary would give his views on the Ordinance. They had no right whatever, on a subject of such moment, to the race, the Empire, and the country, to speak from the narrow view of labour or the sectional view of trades unionism. They should not forget their duties as Members of Parliament, who had a right to protest against indentured labour and against the Chinese slavery which the Ordinance safe-guarded. He had no prejudice against the Chinaman. His virtues, not his vices, were to be exploited to his own detriment and to the white man's undoing, by men who were not as virtuous as the Chinaman they sought to use. As to the Chinaman's morality, it was comparable to the morality of drunkard Rhodesians from Throgmorton Street, who, on Friday night at the Covent Garden ball, in the presence of Inspector French, displayed more disgusting immorality than he himself had ever seen in Chinatown, San Francisco. He did not protest against the Chinaman as a Chinaman, but he protested against 10,000 men of any nationality being violently dumped down in the heart of any community at the instance of Sir George Farrar, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Beit, and other patriots who sung "God save the King" in broken English, and wanted an interpreter for the top notes. Those men were to be dumped down in South Africa because their character and susceptibilities were such that, collectively, they could be used to violently drag down the standard of life and comfort, and incidentally the standard of the morality of the community, into which they had been projected.

The Colonies were against this Ordinance. Mr. Deakin, Mr. Seddon, and all white Australia were opposed to it. In March, 1903, Sir George Farrar's own miners passed a resolution dead against it. Mr. Mather, to whom the Colonial Secretary had referred as being in favour of the importation of Chinese labour, was present at that meeting and appealed for fairness for Sir George Farrar, who made a strong and vigorous speech against the importation. If he had changed his views he was not the only one who had done so. Lord Milner, up to 1903, was against it, and he did not believe that the late Colonial Secretary could be quoted in favour of it. White labour in South Africa was also against it. Meetings had been held and petitions adopted against it, and there was a celebrated meeting to which 500 miners were sent at 15s. a head to howl down speakers who denounced Chinese labour; but these men in their hearts did not want it. Both organised and unorganised labour was opposed to it. Who were for it? Ex-Jameson raiders, mine-owners, and official members of the Legislative Council. What did the Colonial Secretary say about it himself? He had only one plea, and that was necessity which knows no law. He gave them a long, ingenious, subtle legal argument, but that was the only plea it contained, and that was the plea with which the thief was confronted every day of his life. Necessity was that which stood between all of us, and that declension which marked us off from being honest men. But our forebears did not allow necessity to weigh with them when they gave £20,000,000 for emancipation. If only hon. Members could see, as he had seen on both the East and West Coasts of Africa, our gunboats chasing Arab dhows and our sailors working their very hearts out in pursuit of slave raiders, and with the object of saving human souls, they would hesitate to accept the plea of necessity. Where was the necessity? There were 120 gold mining companies, with £57,000,000 of capital, and a value of £174,000,000, and in the last few years they had payed £20,000,000 in dividends, ranging from 5 to 187 per cent. Necessity knew no law. Greed knew no limitation. The Colonial Secretary had told them there were 30,000 natives short, and he had insisted, on that ground, that the opposition to the proposal should drop. The question of submitting the point to a *referendum* had been raised. Well as to a *referendum*, on the question of slavery he would not have dictation from any colony. He did not care whether there was a *referendum* or not. If there were one the mine-owners would manipulate it and it would be corrupt. It would be one appealing to greed and to the lowest feelings, and the men would be told to vote for it because it would be the salvation of Africa. If they were to have Chinese labour in South Africa let them have it direct from the Colonial Secretary and after a long discussion in Parliament. Who were the Commissioners they were supposed to respect? Four out of the seven of the majority on the Commission were ex-Jameson raiders—men who confessed to being either liars, forgers, or conspirators, and he refused to accept their dictum. Others were officials of the big companies—men who in the pursuit of wealth had resorted to raids, rebellion, bribery, and even war in the interests of protection and slavery. He refused to accept them on any ground.

But was there any necessity for this? Mr. Birchenough, a gentleman who stood well in the councils of the Colonial Office, in his report said that during the last few years the native recruiting returns had been decidedly satisfactory, and January and February of this year had been equal in production to the best months of 1898. There was reason to believe that, before another twelve months had passed, things would be restored to the high level which obtained before the war. Then there was Mr. Grant, than whom nobody knew more about South Africa. He declared before the Commission that the effect of the ill-judged reduction of wages had been to stop the return of the natives to the mines and the difficulty had been accentuated by the war, the natives not having spent their earnings during the war and there being plenty of work in the re-erection of farm buildings. Sir Godfrey Lagden and other gentlemen of experience testified to the same effect, and declared that when the natives—many of whom earned per day during the war as much as six times what our soldiers who were fighting our battles, earned—had spent their savings they would go back to the mines, and matters would readjust themselves. Mr. Grant went further and declared that some of the shortage of labour had been deliberately arranged by the mine-owners themselves in order to support their claim for the importation of Chinese labour. Then a question had arisen as to the treatment of the Chinese on their passage to South Africa. Evidently there was feared a repetition of the horrors of the Middle Passage, and he was anxiously awaiting the letter from the Chinese Minister. What did the Ordinance seek to do? It proposed to do that which was never done in the history of slavery in the West Indies. This Ordinance was like a bill of lading for billets or railway sleepers. The negro slave in America was never treated as these Chinese were to be treated. He was not made to live in a compound, part prison and part hospital, while a company made huge profits out of him by selling him rotten meal and deceased mealies, and by subjecting him to loathsome conditions. When the American negro had completed his day's task he was free to do as he liked, to go to his chapel or to his market and to indulge in games. When he was on the West Coast of Africa he had some experience of Kroomen and Kaffirs and he found them honest, loyal, clean, and industrious. If they occasionally indulged in more wives than one, well they only followed the example of our impecunious peers who married American heiresses in order that they might keep them. These poor fellows were treated like human beings. But the Chinese who were to be imported into South Africa would not be so treated. These were to be bound over for three years instead of for six months only, they would be kept in a compound and would receive probably 8d. or 9d. a day and their rations.

He ventured to assert that if the African natives had been treated properly there would have been no shortage of labour. The Colonial Secretary had quoted Canon Scott Holland's description of labour in South Africa, but let them read his articles in the *Christian Commonwealth* and he did not think they would find the Canon was in favour of compound labour. Of course when a Member of the House went to Kimberley he was invited to visit the De Beer's compounds. A carriage met him at the station, a nice luncheon awaited him at the other end. The compound had been smartened up, boys came out in their festive garb, but let them only go behind the scenes. Everyone knew what these De Beers compounds really were; in spite of what credulous high Church parsons and more credulous low-grade politicians might say, they would find both illness and brutality. Look at the alarming death rate. They had a series of companies making profits varying from 5 to 187 per cent., in addition to a profit of from 20 to 40 per cent. by the truck system, and by supplying rotten meal and diseased mealies. Last year in Great Britain one miner per 1,000 was killed; and in Kimberley 12 per 1,000. In the Rand compounds the death-rate was 70 per 1,000 and in some cases 106 Why we had nearly half a million of British soldiers engaged in the war for

3½ years, and the death-rate so long as the war lasted was only 38 per 1,000. Out of 58,250 natives employed there were 3,085 deaths in nine months. This was the reason natives, Kaffirs, Zulus, and Lobengula boys would not accept the work, and chief after chief had declared their boys should not go to the mines to be killed or brutalised as they had been. In one case which had been quoted there had been 240 deaths among only 1,600 boys in 9 months. Remove the causes of excessive mortality, treat the natives fairly, and their labour would return. Of the deaths 48 per cent. were caused by bad food, largely consisting of condemned Government stores. Look at the death rate and the causes of the deaths, 12 per cent. were described as from scurvy; why, among the 800,000 British miners he had failed to discover that one death had arisen from scurvy. Many deaths were due to diarrhœa and similar diseases, indeed 48 per cent. might be attributed to stinking meat, rotten mealies, bad cooking, bad attendance in hospital, and the filthy disgusting purgatives administered to the poor creatures continuously one week before they left the compounds to return to their native land.

If the Colonial Secretary wanted to stop the shortage of native labour he would tell him how to do it. The labourers should be given better house accommodation, better food, fires in their compounds, better ventilated quarters, more air space, clean drinking water in the mines, and proper sanitation, and the sale to them of mealies from condemned Government stores should be stopped. The statement of the Colonial Secretary with regard to the whites refusing to work with blacks was exaggerated. Whites could and ought to be increasingly used in South Africa on the railways, municipalities, handy work, and many other branches of labour now performed by natives. Black and white men worked together in America; they did not work in the same companies, but they worked in different regiments; they worked together on hundreds of ships, and they could be induced to work together more in South Africa if wages were raised. He had himself worked with black men, and the more he had had to do with them the more he had respected them. The reason of the difficulty about their working together was that one section was played off against the other to the common discomfiture and detriment. If white labour was introduced to a greater extent into the mines this objection would gradually disappear. That it was disappearing was shown by the fact that whereas before the war there were 100,000 natives and 10,000 white men in the mines, there were now 68,000 blacks and 13,000 whites, a proof that when necessity compelled the thing could be done. It was true that white men who went to South Africa were showing an indifference to honest labour. He deprecated the fact, but whose fault was it? Modern Imperialism appeared to have only two results—to make chronic loafers abroad and "little loafers" at home. For political purposes it had been dinned into the ears of these men that they were boys of the bull-dog breed, that one Briton was worth three Frenchmen, nine Kaffirs, and fifteen Chinamen, and men who at home were content with honest labour at reasonable remuneration, were taught immediately they went to Imperial South Africa to buffet the negro, to hustle him off the path into the road, and to look upon honest labour as not being the work or duty of white men. An Empire founded on such conditions could not last. An Empire that wished to evade labour instead of recognising its dignity, and to secure gold by compound slavery, by the subjection of Kaffirs and Chinamen, would be incapable of producing that physique and moral strength by which Empires alone could be maintained.

He might be asked what was his alternative. Roughly, it was better treatment, higher wages, better food, better housing, a greater regard for tribal customs, and a greater respect for inter-tribal habits. It was not right to jumble together men from the East Coast and men from Central Africa, or to take away their chiefs and deprive them of the only comfort they had in life. If it was a question between this slavery and the extinguishing of the diamond industry his choice was made. His life had been based on the model of the Vicar of Wakefield; his tastes were simple because his wants were few, and they did not run to diamonds. Why should they not apply to these companies the same restrictions as to water and gas companies, by which a dividend of more than 10 per cent. was not permitted without the commodity being proportionately reduced in price? If, in the interests of peace in South Africa, the owners agreed to amalgamate the mines, they would still be able to pay a dividend of from 20 to 30 per cent. It was no idle threat to say that if this scheme were carried out it might mean the loss of South Africa. He had a letter from a political opponent in his own constituency, a Tory, a protectionist, and an ex-Yeoman, in which this passage occurred—

> "I can assure you that the introduction of Chinese labour will be the first spark to the revolutionary powder in Africa. This time, instead of all men taking up arms for Britain it will be the other way about. One thing is certain, viz., that if the Chinese are landed here there is going to be civil war."

That was from a man who went out to fight for the franchise, for equal rights for all white men, for justice to the native races. It was a serious warning of what might occur. The people were tiring of South Africa. The Jameson Raid sickened them of Imperial finance and financial Imperialism, and they had been disillusioned by the war. If Lord Milner, whose bad temper, lack of humour, and lack of sense of proportion made him not an ideal free Governor, whose traditions were bad, who had packed his office with untrained and inexperienced youngsters, had, in a fit of bad temper, confirmed this Ordinance, it was done under circumstances which justified the Colonial Secretary in reversing his decision. As a politician he welcomed this issue of slavery or free labour in South Africa, but as a Briton, as one who had been in a small way a steward of the British race amongst the negroes of West Africa, and had tried to teach them that to have a white face was to have a kindly heart, and to be a Briton was to be a fair, just, and kindly man, he declared that if the Government, at the instance of men who would profit by it, were to brutalise the natives, to send them to premature death, to subject them to the horrors of the compound equalling the sufferings of the Middle Passage, to involve South Africa in turmoil and dissatisfaction and this country in an electoral fight, there would be but one ending to it, viz., the re-assertion of liberty, freedom, and independence, and the revival of the anti-slavery enthusiasm which had been one of the greatest glories of this House. ["Oh."] If hon. Members doubted it let Parliament be dissolved and the test put to the people. The country would then declare that they did not elect the Government on a war issue, to become the instruments of German Jews, or to make Chinamen or negroes slaves.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I so completely associate myself with what has been said more than once as to the tendency of speeches to become longer and longer, that I can promise the House that I will not stand long in the way of the right hon. Gentleman opposite who is to reply for the Government. I am a time-worn advocate of short and strictly-limited speeches; and I hope that, except on occasions when I could not avoid it, I have not usually offended in the other direction. There are several separate and distinct points of view on this subject of Chinese labour; and I will at once make a confession for what it is worth, as to the effect of some of these points of view. There is the point of view of the mine-owner, who desires to increase his profit; the point of view of the shareholder, who wishes for larger dividends; the point of view of the Pretoria oligarchy or hierarchy, who, having set up in a country desolated by war a costly and elaborate form of Government, find that they cannot get a revenue to support it except on certain terms. From those points of view, I can well understand that there should be a desire for cheap labour in the Transvaal, and the conviction that by the importation of Chinese that advantage will be obtained. But we are here not in the interest of the mine-owners, nor of the speculators, nor of the present Government of the Transvaal. We are here in the interest of this country, and in the interest of the community of the Transvaal, our new fellow-subjects, to whom we stand in the relation of trustees. I have looked carefully through the documents presented by the Government, and, whilst wishing they had been more complete, they satisfy me that the allegation of the scarcity of native labour is not made out. I will not repeat the arguments so well put forward by the hon. Member for Battersea, but I would like to quote from a Minute of the Cape Ministry of August last. They say—

> "To effect a satisfactory solution of the labour question in South Africa what is required above all is the exercise of patience, for Ministers are firmly convinced that, if the continent south of the Equator be explored, sufficient labour is available and can be secured, not only for the mines, but for other forms of work, if fair wages be offered and considerate treatment in the way of houses and food be accorded."

I have heard the Colonial Secretary say that there has been no protest against the Ordinance from the Cape Legislature. Here, at any rate, is the formal declaration of the Cape Ministry, and I find that on 4th January, last month, they say that nothing had occurred since the Minute was drafted to alter their views on the subject.

Then I turn to the other alternative that has been suggested, the larger use of white men. Can anyone looking into these reports come to the conclusion that that alternative has been sufficiently tried by experiment? Why, what is it that happens when an industry anywhere is passing from the stage of cheap labour to better conditions? Everywhere what happens is the introduction of the use of labour-saving appliances. And when it is said that the introduction of Chinese labour would give larger employment to white men, I say that the introduction of labour-saving appliances would equally have that effect, because the machinery would require to be supervised by white men, while the natives did the more unskilled part of the work. So long, however, as muscular machinery, as they call it, is to be had at a cheap rate, no one will trouble themselves about labour-saving appliances. I would ask the House to carry back its mind to what happened, a great many years ago now, in this country, when Lord Shaftesbury and those who acted with him roused the nation on the subject of the condition of our labouring population in many industries. Take the coal mines, what went on in those days in that department of industry? There were not only men, but women and children working down in the mines, girls moving along on all fours, in low and narrow galleries, with chains round their necks, dragging trucks. There were all sorts of horrors of that kind going on. When the conscience of this country was roused to the fact, was anything said about cheap labour, or was any proposal made to introduce Chinese labour here? No, Sir, Parliament immediately ordered that this whole process should be stopped, and left the mine-owners themselves to find the remedy. Well, the mine-owners did find the remedy; the mine-owners, no doubt, had to wait a little while for their profits, and they had to expend a great deal of money, but in the long-run no injury was done either to them or to their industry.

Turning to the question of the opinion of the Colony, I wish to protest against the idea of treating this Crown colony as a self-governing colony. I do not know what that means; it has certainly deceived nobody, and His Majesty's Government and Parliament are not one whit relieved of their responsibility in the matter by such a statement. Every one in South Africa and here, knows how futile have been the steps taken to ascertain the feeling of the community. I will not recount such circumstances as the compelling of editors of newspapers to resign, and the breaking up of meetings, but the truth is that this attempt to combine Crown government with self-government has led to mine-owners' government. It is astonishing to me that right hon. Gentlemen opposite have so soon forgotten what my hon. friend who has just sat down reminded them of, the purpose for which we went to war in South Africa—the necessity, as we were told, the ardent zeal that was professed for self-government. That was the plea that was put before the world, the necessity of having equal rights for all white men as the sole key to contentment and progress, and also the great indignation that was expressed at the treatment of the Kaffir, of whom we hear very little now. In all the interminable correspondence that has taken place between the Colonial Office and the Transvaal Government, there is not a solitary reminder that I have seen of the existence of the Uitlander. What is the main case which the Colonial Secretary puts forward, what is it that he puts most emphatically before the House? I think I am fairly summing it up in these four propositions. First, that Parliament, this country, is threatened with a financial crisis in the Transvaal; secondly, that we have lent £35,000,000 to restore the ravages of the war and to develop the country; thirdly, that we have set up a model, though a costly Government; and, lastly, that that Government cannot pay its way without Chinese labour. That is the contention of the right hon. Gentleman, and he holds out that threat to us—that threat of financial crisis, and loss, and misfortune if we do not agree to this proposal. The hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Wight pricked the bubble of that argument at once, in two or three words; he said there is another alternative to your proposal, which is to reduce your expenditure. We attach as little importance to these predictions of evil as we attached last year to the promises of oil and wine, milk and honey, gold and corn, teeming populations and overflowing revenue, which came from the same persons on the same authority. After the desolation caused by such a war, time is required before progress can be made, and in any case, what a sudden reaction from the optimistic mood of last year to the note of despair to-day!

Our position is clear. We have to think of the character of this country, and also of the interests of the people of the Transvaal, who have had no voice in the matter. The Transvaal is not a Crown colony in the ordinary sense. If I were to describe it I should say it was a Crown colony in a state of probation for being a self-governing colony, and we are asked to take advantage of this brief interval to mortgage the future of the colony behind its back. These new fellow-subjects of ours, who have had no voice in this matter, when their novitiate is over, are to be started on their career bearing the burden which we are now asked to impose upon them—a burden such as no other self-governing colony in the Empire will bear and which no other self-governing colony would be willing to accept. I ask is that fair to them? Is it fair to us, who have this proposal flung at us without any opportunity of fully examining the details, in the very first days of a session, involving the most sacred traditions of our race and the credit and character of the country? Better, I say, a thousand times that we should go on for a time financing the Transvaal, than that we should bow to such a threat and, by so doing, commit a great wrong and injure our own self-respect and bring upon us the opprobrium of the world.

The only other question I shall ask is: What is the hurry in this matter; why are we, to use a modern word, to be so hustled? The information comes dribbling out day after day, one Blue-book or one Parliamentary paper after another—this very day a new one—and many that we have not yet received at all. But this sort of thing has happened before. An hon. Gentleman who made a speech a short time ago spoke of the resolution that was come to at Blœmfontein. But this question was sprung upon that Conference at Bloemfontein much in the same way as it is sprung upon us; and I observe that Sir Godfrey Lagden, surely not a very partial witness, says, in the Blue-book, that he was surprised at Bloemfontein that no facts and figures were given to sustain the case. It is very much the same with the British House of Commons. What, I ask, is the urgency? The Government are very fond of a mandate. They will not do anything without a mandate. They will not disclose a policy until they receive a mandate. But at the last General Election the mandate they received was to end the war and to improve the Army, not to introduce slavery; and I hold that, taking two alternatives, if the Transvaal in its present position is a self-governing colony, its people ought to be consulted, and if it is a Crown colony, then the people of this country ought to be consulted before we commit ourselves. No more important issue could be put before the country, and I venture to say that, if the Government commit the people of this country to this policy, a terrible day of reckoning will certainly come to them.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Nobody who knows the right hon. Gentleman will accuse him of unduly trespassing on the time of the House; but I think all will sympathise with him in finding himself in the position of having, for the third time in the course of a fortnight, to wind up a debate for the Opposition on a vote of censure on the Government. The first was based on the conduct of the Government during the war—a debate which began with an impeachment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and ended, I venture to say, with an impeachment of the Leader of the Opposition. There was a large majority against him on that occasion. [OPPOSITION laughter]. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite will tell me of one single occasion in the Parliament when they were in office when they had a majority of over eighty. On the second occasion the majority showed a number of Gentlemen who, at all events, were agreed upon the policy on which they voted, and the minority contained a body of sixty or seventy Members who, before the division, administered to the right hon. Gentleman the reminder that their support was temporary and conditional. Under these circumstances I think we shall all agree that the reappearance of the right hon. Gentleman upon the scene to-night in the same capacity is a triumph of hope over experience. And, like those who indulge too freely in intoxicating liquors, the right hon. Gentleman finds it necessary at each fresh onslaught to double the dose. We began this debate in quiet and reasoned periods which befitted the Amendment. But to-night we have been treated to platform oratory in which the leading part must be assigned to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, who delivered a speech which had no reference to the Ordinance as it appears before us. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman will argue next that any comment which anyone can make upon anybody's public action is to be considered the legitimate and official interpretation of that public action. With regard to the imputation of slavery, let me put to the House the actual facts of the case. That is the imputation which has been repeated over and over again to-night, and which will, of course be repeated over and over again in the country. What are the restrictions under which these men are to go to South Africa, if they please, and obtain labour in the Transvaal which they cannot get in their own country? The Chinaman is free to make his bargain, which will be explained to him by men competent to interpret the matter properly to him before he leaves his own country. He is free to come or to stay away. He binds himself, not for life, but for a period of three years. When he goes to the Transvaal, he is free to labour; and my right hon. friend will take care to make it sufficiently clear, in the regulations, that if he desires to leave his employment he will be allowed to do so, subject to the usual proviso, that by his work he should pay the expense of his voyage. Therefore he will be free to terminate his employment provided he can do so without loss to his employers. I am going to make, not a comparison, but an exact parallel. All this fine language, all these heroic terms, have been employed with regard to the circumstances under which men belonging to one of the most intelligent races on the face of the earth are to make a bargain to go for three years into good employment. Is there no other class which this House invites to make a bargain and places under similar restrictions without the imputation of slavery? What about every soldier of the Crown? Allow me to complete the parallel, and then, if necessary, I shall stand corrected. The soldier serves for three years, and the soldier cannot break his engagement except by making a large payment. The indentured labourer in the Transvaal will be confined to his barracks in a "Chinese village," and the soldier is confined to his barracks, and gets leave, as the indentured labourer will, from his superior. The indentured labourer has his hours laid down for him and so has the soldier, without any right of appeal. The indentured labourer has his pay and his food is supplied to him; so has the soldier. The indentured labourer, if he breaks compound or deserts, comes under a penalty; so does the soldier. Then, Sir, are we to be told from that Bench that it is a degradation for the indentured labourer to be subjected, under this proposal, to the same restrictions which are denounced as slavery, which apply to 200,000 men in His Majesty's service? The conditions under which they enter are entered into on their part without any sacrifice of their character or of their liberty.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) (who rose amidst cries of "Order")—Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman—[uproar, and loud cries of "Order"]—Mr. Speaker, might I ask the right hon. Gentleman one question?

*MR. SPEAKER: As the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India has given way, I hope the House will listen to the hon. and gallant Member.

MAJOR SEELY: Might I ask, Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman whether it is within his knowledge that the Government of India have refused to permit British Indian subjects to submit to the degrading conditions of the Ordinance?

*MR. BRODRICK: That assumption has no foundation whatever in fact. Now, I think it will be admitted by those who heard the speech of the Colonial Secretary that he established, by conclusive arguments, a strong case for dealing at once with this labour question. What did he show in his careful review? First, that two years after the war, not only had the supply of labour not been made up, but that there was no prospect of arriving at the necessary amount of labour, and this applied not merely to the mines but to other cases where native labour was required. Another point which he established was that white men cannot be induced, if it was even desirable that they should be induced, to work side by side, at unskilled labour, with the black labourer. The third point he made good was that the introduction of Asiatic labour would not interfere with white labour, with white wages, or with white morality—while it would greatly advance the country at a moment when, as I shall show, it is being subjected to exceptional strain. I wish to sweep away in one word——

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Hear, hear!

*MR. BRODRICK: I am cheered by the hon. Member for Donegal who made a speech when the House was not so full as it is now. I will specially refer to one sentence of that speech which constitutes, I think, with other remarks a regrettable feature of this debate. I am not going to follow the hon. Member into the aspersions which he cast on a great public servant when he accused Lord Milner, not merely of sympathy with, but of interest in, those millionaires who are making a profit by the mines; nor am I going to deplore the expression of the hon. Member when he said that my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary was the creature of Lord Milner, who in his turn was the creature of the millionaires.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Hear, hear!

*MR. BRODRICK: I do take notice of the remark, made by many speakers, but especially by the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division, who generally speaks in this House with great moderation as well as ability, that throughout the whole of this agitation the Government had been in the hands of financiers in Park Lane. That remark in varying terms has been repeated six or seven times this evening. I am not going to insult my colleagues on this Bench by disclaiming for each, individually and collectively, any social, political, or financial interest in any party who are now engaged in business in the Transvaal; but I think those who make such charges have little studied the present economic position in the Transvaal. If a change is needed at the present moment, it is not in the interest of the mine-owners or the mine shareholders; but it is because unless there is a change, and a radical change, no man in the colonial or military service can possibly have a decent living at the present prices in the Transvaal. This is not a subject of debate. [Laughter.] It is not a subject of laughter. There are men who have refused appointments in the Army because they could not make both ends meet on the pay in South Africa. In these new Colonies food is dear, house-rent is enormous, and the wages of servants are almost prohibitive. At this moment, apart from that, you have, as the Secretary for the Colonies showed last night, a falling revenue and a considerable debt. Why is that the case? [AN HON. MEMBER: The war.] It is because you have not got enough agricultural labour, and you have not got the labour to extend the railways, in which the Transvaal stands alone among British Colonies in its backwardness at the beginning of the twentieth century. It may be asked; Why do you provide labour for the mines first? The mines pay seven-eighths of the entire revenue of the Transvaal; and if we are to provide for the other necessary services, without which the population must remain as backward as before the war, we must first set the mining industry on a fair level of prosperity, in order to obtain that stability of finance which is necessary to the complete success of the whole.

The hon. and learned Member for Hawick who spoke a little earlier to-night made a consistent speech, for he has always objected to war. He has always misconceived our motives with regard to the war. He opposed, I believe, the annexation of the Colonies, and therefore he cannot be considered an unbiassed witness as to the measure now to be taken. He spoke with more than his usual earnestness and, perhaps, less than his usual fairness. I will make that good. He attacked my right hon. friend for the remarks he made last night with regard to General Botha. My right hon. friend stated with regard to General Botha that he could not accept him as a witness who represents, as General Botha professes to do, Boer feel- with regard to this matter. The hon. and learned Gentleman went into an argument with regard to the way in which the Commission had taken evidence and spoke of their having been "adepts at suppression and distortion," and objected to the refusal to accept General Botha as representative of Boer feeling. But if General Botha disapproved of Chinese labour, he also plainly told the Commission that what he desired for the Kaffirs was the enforcement of the squatter law, and, by removing them from their locations, the driving of them into agricultural pursuits. That is a policy that will not be accepted by the House, for General Botha's opinions are not accepted by the Boers. My right hon. friend has handed me a telegram received to-night from Lord Milner giving the following letter from Mr. Van Rensburg, a member of the Transvaal Legislative Council. He is a farmer and a Boer representative.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Is he a Boer representative?

*MR. BRODRICK: I beg pardon. I should say that if the right hon. Gentleman means to ask, was he elected by the Boers to represent them, then in that case no doubt he is not a Boer representative. He is a representative Boer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: A Dublin Castle Boer.

*MR. BRODRICK: His letter says—

"I have seen in the Press that the despatch your Excellency has cabled to Mr. Alfred Lyttelton contains a letter received from General Botha and signed by him on behalf of certain gentlemen who claim to represent the Boer opinion of the Transvaal on the question of Asiatic immigration. I venture also to write praying your Excellency to cable to Mr. Alfred Lyttelton my protest against the position taken up by General Botha in which he claims that he has the right to represent Boer opinion. British public opinion has far too long been allowed to believe that such is the case. The people of England have been told that because General Botha refused to take the seat offered to him on the Legislative Council therefore the Boers are not represented on that Council. I protest against this doctrine going out to the world as a fact. I maintain that Boer opinion is adequately represented in the Legislative Council by five Boer members, of whom I am proud to be one. Each of us would be prepared at any time to contest with General Botha the representation of any country district of the Transvaal with confidence of success."

On behalf of the Government I may say that we are not prepared to accept General Botha's proposal that we should proceed to coercion of the Kaffirs in order to obtain sufficient labour. We know that there is a great deal of labour which might be obtained if it were possible to impound all labour; but we know that if that labour were obtained there is not sufficient labour in South Africa available among the Kaffirs to fulfil the needs of the Transvaal at the present time. If we are to extend the railways, for which this House has so often loudly cheered, if we are to provide the Boers themselves even with the Kaffir labour which they had before the war, we require, according to some authorities, 60,000, according to others 80,000, or 100,000 more Kaffir labourers than at present. What is the alternative you place before the Government by this proposal? If you defeat the Government, which you will not do, you on that side of the House, many of whom during the war I have heard making attacks on the Kaffirs and speaking about their position in the social scale in language which I will not now recapitulate—you will be placing in the hands of Kaffirs the whole monopoly of labour in South Africa, and by doing so you will make the Kaffirs the dictators of the pace at which civilisation should proceed in that country. Do not let it be supposed that by introducing other labour you are handicapping the whites. You are enabling the whites to find subsistence. It is not I who say this. The hon. Member for Camberwell last night said that shiploads of whites were coming away from South Africa, and the other day, when 3,000 or 4,000 Kaffirs left their work on the railways, 600 or 700 whites superintending them had immediately to be dismissed. Nobody has spoken more strongly upon that than the right hon. Member for Aberdeen. He says—

> "All hard labour, all unskilled labour, is, and must be, done by the blacks. The coloured man is indispensable to the white man. He is a necessary part of the economic machinery of the country, whether for mining or for manufacture, for tillage or for ranching."

An entirely false economic parallel has been drawn between the objection in Australia to the introduction of Chinese labour and the objection in South Africa. There is no parallel between the two cases except this — that both countries are British colonies. In Australia it is a question of the coolie competing against the white man; in Africa it is a question of the yellow man competing against the black man. In Australia the experience has been of unrestricted permanent Chinese labour, and in Africa the proposal is to have temporary labour under definite restrictions. We have heard very tall talk with regard to this labour. The Member for Camberwell said that the British soldier would tear off his medals sooner than see the Chinaman performing his religious observances in his own compound; and we have been told that we are establishing a moral pest spot, and a moral cancer. Some years ago a statesman said that the Australian Colonies taxed the Chinaman and that that was protection pure and simple. They taxed him not because it was the desire of an enlightened race not to associate with a nation of a less degree of enlightenment—not on account of the Chinaman's vices, but because of his virtues, because he did more work for the money, because he consumed less liquor. That is the statement of Mr. Gladstone. It is ten years since the voice of Mr. Gladstone was heard in this House, but I think the echo of these sentiments will be more powerful tonight than some of the utterances to which we have listened. We are asked to delay this Ordinance. My right hon. friend has given some most specific pledges as to the regulations, and those pledges will be specifically observed. What is the Ordinance? The Ordinance is an Ordinance of the Transvaal Legislative Council which the Council has made and the Council can revok by it; and if hon. Members opposite upset the Government they can themselves reconsider the subject. When self-government is given to the Transvaal, which hon. Gentleman opposite regard as an early expedient, the colony will itself be able, at any moment it pleases, to deal with this Ordinance. It is hedged about with every restriction which philanthropy can suggest, and I think this House would exercise an unwise discretion if it placed any difficulty in the way of the Government to-night. Have we not too often in the past stepped in here to change that which those on the spot advised us to do in connection with our colonies. This is a time when the House should disregard sentimental forebodings which have no foundation, which are in fact appeals to prejudice that may do for the platform, but are too thin for the House of Commons. The House should now express its determination to place the labour question in the Transvaal on such a footing as may tend to the civilising of that colony, and so avoid the difficulties which have been clearly pointed out, and the effects of which may be clearly foreseen.

MR. CROOKS rose to continue the debate immediately before midnight, and was received with cries of "Order."

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) moved that the Question be now put.

MR. CROOKS, addressing the Speaker amid loud cries of "Order," said he desired to be heard.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that the Question be now put.

MR. CROOKS again attempted to speak, beginning with the words "Surely, Mr. Speaker," but the remainder of the sentence was lost in cries of "Order." Speaking in a loud voice, which was audible above the clamour, the hon. Member said, I feel, Mr. Speaker, that, rather than sit silent on this Bench, I am prepared to be suspended from the service of this House.

*MR. SPEAKER: I quite understand that the hon. Member feels strongly on this matter, but, having made his protest, I hope he will not persist in what would be a breach of the Rules of this House, but will acquiesce in those Rules, which were made for the benefit of the whole House.

MR. CROOKS, again rising amid loud cries of "Order" and some cries of "Name," said: I want to be respectful to the House, but this is a matter on which I feel very strongly. I want to ask you, Sir, whether the Government intend by moving the closure to make it impossible for me to speak.

*MR. SPEAKER: The duty is thrown on the Chair of accepting or rejecting the Motion for the closure after it has been proposed. I am sure the hon. Member does not wish to show any disrespect to the Chair. The closure has been moved.

MR. CROOKS rose again, but was, as before, received with loud cries of "Order," and some cries of "Go on" from his supporters. He, however, quickly resumed his seat.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 330; Noes, 172. (Division List No. 3.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, Robert
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt.Hn.Sir Mich. Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blyndell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Butcher, John George

Campbell, Rt.Hn. J.A(Glasgow
Campbell, J.H.M(Dublin Univ.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cecil Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, RtHn. J.A(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cogan, Denis J.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, Sir T.R(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duffy, William J.
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir W. Hart
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farrell, James Patrick
Field, William
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Sir Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. H. (Warwick, S.W.
Fyler, John Arthur

Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gilhooly, James
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J.E. (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets
Gore, Hn.G. R. C. Orms.-(Salop
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henty Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, SirE.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald

Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, RtHnLord G(Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayden, John Patrick
Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Heniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, RtHn H.(Somers't, E
Hope, J.F(Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jameson, Major J. Eustance
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joyce, Michael
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees

Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'uth
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred

Macdona, John Cumming
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Maconochie, A. W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Hugh, Patrick, A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, RtHnSir H.E(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W.J.H(Dumfriessh-
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murphy, John
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Hurray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.

Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn. Wm. Rob. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ridley, S.Forde (BethnalGreen
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Roche, John
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, RtHn. Col.Edw. J
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C.(North'mb.Tynesid
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'dUniv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent, Col.Sir C.E.H(Sheff'd
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R.(Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E.C(S.Andrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydv.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, D. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W
Llayland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
MacDonnell, Dr, Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald

M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose
Moulton, John Fletcher
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Co. John P. (Galway, N
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J.E.B(Isleof Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (Kork, W. R.)
Tillet, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trekelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wood, James
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there added."

The House divided:—Ayes 230; Noes 281. (Division List No. 4.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings

Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E.C(S.Andrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)

Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Hain, Edward
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (M'rth'r T'dvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James

Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.

Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick, A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. Jn. (Montrose)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs).
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tillet, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wood, James
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudd'rsf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George

Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir Jn. Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Dewar, Sir T. R (Tower Haml'ts
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart

Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)

Faber, George Denis (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E(Elgin&Nairn
Gordon, J.(Londonderry,South
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets
Gore, Hn.G.R.C.Orms.-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,RtHn LordG(Midd'x
Hamilton,Marq.of (L'donderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Jas. (Staffords., N.W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,RtHn H(Somers't,E
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightsde
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N.R.
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell,RtHn.Sir H.E(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H.(Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn. Wm.RobertWellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ridley,S.Forde (Bethnal Green
Roberts, Jamuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt.Hn. Col.Edw.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith,H.C(North'mb Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chicheter)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent,Col.Sir C.E.H(Sheff'ld
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt. Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (Yorks, E.R
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 18th February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power [H.L.]; Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power [H.L.]; Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway [H.L.]; Trafford Park Dock and Railway [H.L.]; Victoria University of Yorkshire [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Elysée Palace Hotel Company [H.L.]

Also the Certificate that no further Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill :—Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways [H.L.]

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Mid-Cheshire Tramways.

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways ; London United Tramways ; London United Tramways (Railways). The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill ; Rotherham Corporation Bill ; Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways Bill ; London United Tramways Bill ; London United Tramways (Railways) Bill. Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

Govan Burgh Electricity Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1ª.

Bristol Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]. Presented ; read 1ª ; and referred to the Examiners.

York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY ESTIMATES.

Estimates for the year 1904-1905 ; with explanation of differences.

Explanatory statement by First Lord of the Admiralty.

AFRICA, No. 2 (1904).

Report on the trade and commerce of the Somaliland Protectorate, for the year 1902-1903.

COMMERCIAL, No. 1 (1904).

Reports on tariff wars between certain European States.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT COMMITTEE.

Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the question of musical copyright ; with separate report by Mr. J. Caldwell, M.P., and minutes of evidence.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of December, 1903. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Lancaster in the year ended 21st December, 1903 ; also, a separate account of the capital of the said Duchy to the same date.

INEBRIATES' ACT, 1898.

Regulations for the management of State inebriate reformatories in Ireland.

NATIONAL DEBT.

I. (Military Savings Banks)—Account of gross amount of all moneys received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt on account of "The Fund for Military Savings Banks."

II. (Savings Banks and Friendly Societies)—Account of the gross amount of all sums received and paid by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

National Debt on account of banks for savings and friendly societies in Great Britain and Ireland, from their commencement at 6th August, 1817, to 20th November, 1903, inclusive.

Account of the several transactions which have taken place, during the year ended 20th November, 1903, in the investment of all moneys which came into the hands of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt for savings banks and friendly societies.

Account showing the aggregate amount of the liabilities of the Government to the trustees of savings banks and friendly societies respectively on 20th November, 1903, &c.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following, viz. :—

E. Chesterfield
E. Waldegrave
V. Churchill
L. Balfour
L. Ribblesdale.

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the Five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed : The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee :

M. Salisbury. (*L. Privy Seal*)
D. Bedford.
D. Marlborough.
D. Northumberland
M. Lansdowne.
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Cadogan.
E. Howe.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Dartrey.
E. Lytton.
E. Carrington.
E. Crewe.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Knutsford.
V. Ridley.
V. Churchill.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Barnard.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Poltimore.
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Fermanagh. (*E. Erne.*)
L. Lamington.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Newton.
L. Welby.
L. Ludlow.

All petitions relating to the Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered.

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.]—(*The Lord Ribblesdale*).

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.]—(*The Lord Ribblesdale*). Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read, and discharged.

FISCAL POLICY.

THE EARL OF CREWE, in pursuance of Notice, rose "to ask His Majesty's Government what steps they propose to take to give effect to the policy of 'negotiation and retaliation' announced by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on 2nd February; and to move that no duty upon imports into the United Kingdom from foreign countries, or from British colonies and dependencies, should be imposed, modified, or removed without the formal consent of Parliament to each such proposal." He said: My Lords, it often happens in the progress of the business of your Lordships' House, that Questions are put and Motions made rather with a view to exciting discussion than of obtaining information, and I have seen it stated that on this occasion our object in bringing forward this subject is not so much to obtain information as to start a debate. It seems to be assumed that our demand for information is not a genuine one, and that our ignorance of the intentions of His Majesty's Government is comparable to that which is sometimes announced by learned Judges on the bench who, for an object which I have never been able to understand, sometimes profess to be unacquainted with the most elementary and notorious facts of ordinary life. But I can assure your Lordships that with us that is not the case. We are genuinely desirous of obtaining information from His Majesty's Government on a subject which we consider to be of the first importance, and upon which, in spite of a long political campaign during the recess, and in spite of a brilliant though rather one sided debate in another place lasting upwards of a full week, the intentions of

His Majesty's Government are still to a great extent undeclared and obscure.

I propose mainly—almost entirely—to deal with what are known as the Government proposals for retaliation and negotiation. At the same time, it is so uncertain whether those proposals are in fact to be taken as standing alone, or whether they are to be taken in connection with the wider proposals of Mr. Chamberlain, that I cannot affect to be surprised if in the course of the debate other noble Lords—particularly those who left the Government on account of those very proposals of Mr. Chamberlain—allow the discussion to range over a somewhat wider field. It is perfectly true that at this moment Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are less in evidence than they were in the autumn months. Their distinguished author has gone abroad in search of a well-earned holiday, after the fatigues of a campaign which, though we cannot regard it with sympathy, we regard at any rate with admiration for the combative energy which sustained it. It is also true that during the debate in another place there was not much outside defence, if I may use the phrase, of those proposals of Mr. Chamberlain. It is also true that when a by-election takes place, and the travelling mountebanks of the Tariff Reform League swoop down upon the constituency, the distracted Government candidate offers them, so to speak, 6d. to go and perform in the next street. But, after all, Mr. Chamberlain will return, as we hope, restored in health after his foreign tour; and so long as the Parliamentary candidates who adopt Mr. Chamberlain's programme in its entirety receive, as they have been receiving, the special benediction of the Prime Minister and of His Majesty's Government, and so long as among the few voices raised on behalf of Mr. Chamberlain's policy in the debate in another place, there are voices which come from the Treasury Bench, and, above and beyond all, so long as the finances of the country are committed to a gentleman whom we all respect, but who has adopted in their entirety the proposals of his distinguished father—so long as that condition of things exists, we certainly shall maintain that any public dissociation of the Government policy from the policy of Mr. Chamberlain is merely collusive and probably only temporary. I remember some years ago I took part in an inquiry, in the course of which it appeared that certain great companies were obliged by Statute, when asked by those who dealt with them, to supply certain information. It also appeared that when that information was given it bore very little reference to the actual facts of the case. We asked the learned counsel who appeared for the companies how this could be explained, and he informed us that the reply of the companies was what was known as a technical reply. This is an agreeable phrase which I propose to adopt on this occasion, and I say that any statement of the Government with reference to their dissociation from Mr. Chamberlain's proposals can only be regarded as being of a merely technical character.

I do not propose in the remarks I have to make to your Lordships to touch—except possibly by way of illustration—upon the question of colonial preference, of a food tax, or of a general tariff. I propose to confine my observations to the question of retaliation, which is understood to be in some form or other the policy of His Majesty's Government. Retaliation may be a very great matter or it may be a very small matter, and our object in initiating this debate is to discover whether the Government mean it to be large or small. So far as could be gathered from the remarks of Mr. Balfour during the recess, I should certainly have concluded that he regarded it as a great matter. At Sheffield, on 1st October, among some statements which were not over clear, Mr. Balfour made one very clear statement. He put it in the form of a question and answer, which seems to have been adapted from the service for the Ordination of Priests and Deacons in the Church of England. He imagined himself to be addressed by some hierarch of protection, such for example as Mr. Henry Chaplin, who may be held, I think, to possess the apostolical succession from Lord George Bentinck, both as a protectionist and in other and more cheerful fields of enterprise. Mr. Balfour supposed himself to be asked, "Do you desire to alter fundamentally the fiscal tradition which has prevailed during the last two generations?" The answer is, "I do.". From that it is necessary to assume that Mr. Balfour, at any rate at that time, regarded this policy of retaliation as a sort of "wayside inn" at which he and his Party could pause on their way to the goal represented by the larger proposals of Mr. Chamberlain. It is hardly possible, I think, that Mr. Balfour when he made that statement merely meant that at some time or other—he had not settled when—he would bring in some proposal—he had not settled what—for dealing with tariffs in some country—he had not settled where. Therefore, subject to any attentuation of his views which Mr. Balfour may have made in later speeches—and I do not think he did attenuate them greatly—we must regard him as being one of the extreme school of retaliationists.

There is no doubt an entirely different point of view from which this question of retaliation can be approached. There are some undoubted free-traders, who thoroughly believe in the principles of free trade, but who conceive that occasions may arise when retaliation might usefully be applied in our dealings with foreign countries. Among those, I suppose, must be ranked the noble Duke opposite. It was at Liverpool, I think, that the noble Duke expressed an opinion in favour of retaliation, largely on the ground that the adoption of that doctrine would interfere with Mr. Chamberlain's preferential proposals, and his proposals for a general tariff. It is no doubt the case that if retaliation were adopted, Mr. Chamberlain's scheme as announced at Glasgow could not be taken up in its entirety. If you introduce retaliatory duties which are to be taken off when the desired concession is made by the foreign power, you clearly cannot have a complete scheme of colonial preference. But, on the other hand, it certainly seems to me that there would not be very much difficulty in combining a retaliatory scheme with Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. What I suppose he would do would be to institute three tariffs. If I might illustrate what I mean, I would do so by suggesting an analogy, which is not a perfect one, but which I think has a bearing on the case as between these possible tariffs. What is done by railway companies in fixing their rates? Railway companies can fix their rates in three different ways. They may fix an ordinary competitive rate; they may fix a specially low rate for special classes of goods; and, where they possess enough of a monopoly to do it, they may fix as high a rate as the traffic will bear. In a similar way I conceive that Mr. Chamberlain would fix three tariffs. He would have a special tariff—or no tariff at all as it might be in this case—in favour of the Colonies. He would have an ordinary tariff applicable to foreign countries in general; and he would have a specially high tariff which could be put on at will by way of retaliation. Consequently, although no doubt the adoption of retaliation would in some degree complicate Mr. Chamberlain's scheme, it would not, I think, in any way make it impracticable; and I am afraid the noble Duke has been somewhat over sanguine in believing that the adoption of retaliation, as a principle by Parliament, would seriously interfere with the progress of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals.

Now it is assumed by some that, after all, you may threaten a duty without ever having to impose it. Free-traders are to address foreign countries in the well-known phrase which was applied to the French revolutionary: *Soyons frères, ou je t'assomme.* "Swear fiscal brotherhood, or in the name of Mr. Cobden I shall break your head with a tariff." Of course, if it were likely to be the case that a duty would never really have to be imposed, I suppose that nobody, however orthodox a free trader he might be, would object to threatening to impose it. The Society of Friends object to war, but I do not know that any Quaker, however strict, would object to threaten war if he was absolutely guaranteed that war would never take place. After all, that is only a policy of which we have heard lately in another connection, it is the policy of bluff. It may succeed once, it may succeed twice. It might be possible to pick out an instance in which sooner than engage in a tariff contest with this country, some foreign country would consent to reduce its own tariff. But the mere fact of that having happened once would make it less likely to happen another time. You would be tempted on and urged by traders interested in some other commodity to engage in a contest and make the same threat in an article where your case was not quite so strong. Then at last the time would come when the tax would have to be imposed, and I confess that it seems to me absurd and unreal to attempt to argue this question on any other basis than that of having under certain circumstances to impose a tax upon foreign commodities. But then it is argued that although your duty may have to be put on you can take it off whenever you like. The duty is, so to speak, to be placed in a compound like a Chinese labourer at Johannesburg, and when its work is done, like that unhappy Oriental, it is to be placed in a coffin and shipped off again. I do not know, my Lords, whether you will succeed in keeping the Chinamen in the compound, but I am perfectly certain that you will never succeed in keeping these duties inside a compound. Those who believe that the duty can be put on and taken off at will seem to me to forget that, although your intention may not be protective, yet the effect of the duty is protective, and you will very likely have the most powerful trade interests doing their utmost in and out of Parliament to prevent a duty which is bringing them wealth from being taken off, and that they will be able to point out with considerable force that on the faith of that duty they have enlarged their trade operations and invested large sums of capital.

But there is another consideration in this connection which I have not seen pressed, but which seems to me to be important. The noble Marquess opposite, in a phrase which I am afraid he must be getting tired of hearing, alluded to a revolver. It seems to me that his weapon is not going to be a revolver with which you can shoot at sight; it is to be a duelling pistol which has to be used with all the punctilio and delay of a duel. You cannot say to a foreign country, "Unless you reduce the duties on certain of my commodities I shall begin to tax your commodities the day after to-morrow." Out of ordinary international courtesy you must give some fair notice of your intention. During the period of that notice, what happens? The goods of the foreign country are poured into this country, with the result that it is some considerable time before your duty begins to have any effect at all. That happened in Germany, in 1879, when Prince Bismarck first imposed high tariffs on foreign goods. At that time the mills of Bradford and the West Riding of Yorkshire—so I have been told by gentlemen engaged in the trade—worked day and night pouring woollen goods into Germany with the result that it was between two and three years before the German woollen manufacturers derived the slightest benefit from their high tariff. I can give another case much more recent and nearer home. I noticed the other day that a meeting was held on 16th, December of a great firm of sugar refiners, of London and Liverpool, namely, Crosfields, Ltd. In the course of his statement, the chairman attributed the depression in the sugar trade to the fact that continental nations had a large stock of bounty-fed sugar on hand, which they had unloaded on the English market, and that consequently the anticipated rise in the price of sugar had not taken place. It stands to reason, therefore, that if you take your duty off very hurriedly when a concession is made, you may be doing infinitely more harm to the trade which you wish to protect than if you had never entered into negotiations at all.

This leads me to ask whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government that retaliatory duties should be strictly of a reciprocal character, or whether they intend to use one article as a lever for getting a duty taken off another article. That is to say, if you wish to have the duty on English iron reduced, do you propose to tax only German iron, or to threaten to tax German iron, or are you prepared to tax German toys, or some other German article of manufacture, in order to get the duty on English iron reduced? Upon the answer to that question depends to some extent the point I have just raised as to the effect upon the English market, and the delay which must necessarily take place before any duty is actually brought into operation.

My Lords, the practical difficulties in the way of placing the fiscal policy of this country on a retaliatory basis are surely very great indeed. It is argued that it must necessarily help, in making a commercial treaty with a foreign Power, to have this weapon at hand. As an abstract proposition that is no doubt true. You will find it admitted in the text books of the straitest sect of political economists. But I do not know that the mere statement of that fact is any great help to the argument. It no doubt would be true that, if instead of having four or five Army Corps on our home establishment, we had fourteen or fifteen, we might, when engaging in certain international discussions, carry greater weight than we do in the councils of Europe: but the objections to having fourteen or fifteen Army Corps may be so great as to outweigh any conceivable advantages that could be gained. Similarly with regard to this retaliatory power. It surely is a remarkable fact that, as a matter of actual experience, other countries who have the power of putting on duties do not find that in consequence other nations are willing to lower their duties against them. That is a matter of experience. It is exceedingly difficult, I think, to find any instance whatever to the contrary, and, so long as that fact remains, it appears to me to outweigh any amount of theory on the subject. The reason of that I take to be this—and it is a fact which must prevent us, as it seems to me, from ever deriving any great advantage from retaliatory duties—that in the minds of foreign Powers whose avowed policy is protection it is a matter of much less importance to lower duties against themselves than to foster their own manufactures at home. Their object is to develop those manufactures, and consequently they would sooner run the risk of losing a certain portion of our trade than weaken or destroy their own maufactures at home—artificial manufactures set up under protection—by lowering their duties to any serious extent in our favour.

Then, my Lords, there is another point. It seems to me that, compared with the Constitution of other countries, our Constitution is curiously unsuited to deal with these matters. All of us in this House have heard the late Lord Salisbury state his opinion that in certain international negotiations, particularly where there was any prospect of going to war, our habit of free Parliamentary discussion and—I do not know whether he added, but he might have added—our unmuzzled Press, places us at some disadvantage as compared with foreign countries living under a different Constitution. That surely applies very strongly indeed to this question of retaliation. At any rate, if it happened, that in answer to a duty of ours some retaliatory duties were imposed by a foreign Power which seriously hampered or injured some industry of our own, the outcry in the Press and pressure in Parliament might be so strong that it would be impossible for the Government of the day to maintain their position. In some countries on the continent of Europe that cannot happen. In the country against which I suppose retaliation is most aimed—Germany—the conditions are very different indeed. The Government there does not change. Pressure can be placed on the Government only by whole classes of the people, such, for instance, as the Agrarian party. With us, where a Government have not a large majority, it might easily happen that the votes dependent upon some particular industry would become so formidable to the Government of the day, that they would be compelled to relax the pressure which, for the mere purpose of negotiation with a foreign country, they would wish to maintain.

Then I come to a point which seems to me of the first importance, viz., what is, and what is going to be, the attitude of the agricultural community towards these proposals of His Majesty's Government? I have here a quotation, merely a typical one, from a meeting of the Farmers' Club, held on 1st February. It is a typical but an interesting one, because such gentlemen as Mr. Martin Sutton and Mr. Clare Sewell Read were present, men whose names are household words in the agricultural world. At this meeting a gentleman read a paper, in the course of which he said that—

> "Mr. Balfour's policy of retaliation, in the present condition of the industry, would be the last straw required for breaking the camel's back. A duty on American machinery, so much used on lighter soils, must raise the price to the farmer, and home-made machinery would be more expensive, as the restoration of the manufacturing interests would tend to raise wages by absorbing the labour supply. The Government policy of retaliation should, therefore, be opposed by every farmer and landowner, not only in his own interest, but in the interests of the nation at large. Mr. Chamberlain's policy showed a wider grasp of the situation."

Then he went on to explain that the one blot on Mr. Chamberlain's proposa was that it did not include some duties on colonial produce. In the course of the discussion Mr. Clare Sewell Read said that—

"Mr. Balfour was on the right track if he would go far enough."

Of course, we all know what the agricultural community think of these proposals. They are to some extent attracted by the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain, but they are absolutely repelled by those of the Government. I should like to find any noble Lord on the Front Bench opposite who would go down to an agricultural constituency and make a speech expounding this retaliatory policy of the Government, and clearly explaining that under no circumstances is it to be allowed to go beyond the limits expressed by Mr. Balfour. I know one Minister who will not do that, and that is the Minister for Agriculture, whom I do not see in his place. When he has made a speech on this subject he has been in the fortunate position of being able to express by no means veiled sympathy with Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, consequently I have no doubt that he has had, at any rate, a very fair reception on those occasions when he has had to address agricultural gatherings.

I do not wish to weary your Lordships by going into matters which in the course of the long discussion on this subject have become so familiar to us all, viz., as to the possibility of retaliating or of not retaliating on certain countries. As we all know very well, the United States send us £127,000,000 of exports every year, only £10,000,000 of which we could use for purposes of retaliation. The case of Russia is stronger still. Russia sends us £25,000,000 of exports, on only about £40,000 of which we could retaliate. Germany, I dare say, offers a somewhat stronger instance for retaliatory purposes. Germany sends us about £40,000,000 a year of manufactured goods—and when I say Germany I include Holland and Belgium, because at present it is useless to attempt to separate the exports from those countries, though I am glad to know there is a good prospect of an arrangement being made which will enable us to do so. We send to those three countries about £30,000,000 of exports. Therefore, as we import £40,000,000 and export £30,000,000, it does not seem that even in the case of Germany there is such a very strong possibility of retaliation. The strongest case on our side is no doubt France. But it is a curious fact that in the course of this discussion we have not heard much mention of retaliating on France. It is nearly always Germany that has been mentioned in the speeches of tariff reformers. France sends us £27,000,000 of manufactured goods, of which £18,000,000 are represented by articles of wearing apparel of different kinds, depending, I suppose, very largely on the caprice or the dictates of fashion, and which are bought by the people of this country simply because they prefer them to those which are made elsewhere. We send to France only £10,000,000 of manufactured goods; consequently it is quite conceivable, if it is worth while to embark on retaliation for that purpose only, that we might be able to come to some terms with France in a commercial treaty.

Now, there is this further point which I should like to put to His Majesty's Government. Do they not think that if we begin this policy there is some risk of special retaliation taking place against us? When I say "special retaliation," I mean retaliation which is intended merely to injure us—which does not involve duties imposed as foreign duties now are, not to injure us, but in order to benefit the traders at home. Two trades strike me as being exceedingly and peculiarly vulnerable. One is the shipping trade, and the other is the fishery trade. As regards fisheries, we export to Russia and to Germany a very large quantity of cured herrings. To the two countries it is, I think, a matter of £3,000,000 in the year. Those herrings are subject in Germany to a low duty of 3s. a barrel. In Russia the duty is higher—as all duties are—but it is not a protective duty, because there is no Russian product which competes with this particular commodity of cured herrings. In the herring trade we are closely competed with by Holland and Norway. I should like to ask His Majesty's Government whether it is not conceivable that under circumstances of a tariff contest with a foreign country such as Germany or Russia, it might suit that foreign country, even at some inconvenience to certain of its inhabitants (who would not be allowed to express their feelings too strongly), in order to ruin our fishery trade, to impose even a prohibitive duty upon our herrings in favour of the herrings from Holland or from Norway? We are sometimes asserted to believe in the theory of the transferability of labour; that is to say, that if a man is thrown out of work because he is not allowed to make one thing, he can immediately start making something else. I will certainly make noble Lords opposite a present of the opinion that it would not be an easy thing for a Peterhead or a Yarmouth herring fisherman immediately to start to make either watches at Prescot or cheap jewellery at Birmingham.

Now, my Lords, I ask, if this retaliation policy is one which can be so properly and easily adopted, why does not somebody present us with a concrete case? I quite admit that it is not fair to ask noble Lords opposite, members of His Majesty's Government, to state a case in terms. If they were to say, "We should like to impose such and such a duty on such and such a commodity imported from a particular country, or at any rate to threaten to do so, in order to get other duties removed," the obvious reply would be, "Why do you not bring in a Bill with that object?" But even if it is too much to expect that noble Lords who are members of His Majesty's Government will give us information, there surely must be some of the great tribe of experts outside who would be willing to do so. That leads me to ask, what is an expert in this matter? What is an expert who may claim the real Birmingham hall-mark? We know there are certain things that he is not. He must not be a student of political economy. There are many in your Lordship's House who even from their college days have studied political economy; there are some in this House who know as much about it as any professor at any University; but they, I am afraid, cannot be regarded in this particular matter as being experts. Then, again, I fear that no lawyer can be regarded as an expert according to the Birmingham standard. I am sure it would be a matter of profound regret to us if the supposed inability of the legal mind to grasp these matters should cause such diffidence in the mind of the noble Earl on the Woolsack as to prevent him taking part in this debate.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): Hear, hear!

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am delighted to gather from the noble Earl's cheer that he proposes to enlighten us later on. What then, is an expert? An expert is, I suppose, a business man. But he is a business man of a peculiar kind. He is a business man whose business is going or has gone to the dogs. If he has succeeded in business his opinion on these important matters is taken as one which is of by no means the first value. I frankly admit, my Lords, that I do not believe that in the conditions of British commerce this retaliatory policy can be properly or reasonably applied in any way to the advantage of this country. I desire very strongly to protest against the mischievous belief which has been encouraged by some speakers in the course of this campaign, viz., that, because it is possible to show that you can damage foreign countries to some extent by imposing a duty on their commodities, we must necessarily gain by it. Of all the mischievous fallacies which have been propounded in the course of this great discussion, it seems to me that the most mischievous is the assumption that the measure of the foreigner's loss is necessarily the measure of our gain. Of course, it may be said that special circumstances may arise, to meet which, in spite of all difficulties, special measures should be taken. There is no doubt that in the past we have done some curious things in the way of retaliation. Some of your Lordships may have heard of what was known as the Jesuits Bark Act. That was an Act passed in the year 1808 as a sort of reply to the Berlin and Milan decrees of Napoleon in 1806 and 1807. By that Act it was stated that no quinine, or Jesuits bark as it was then called, or cotton-wool, should be allowed to reach the Continent of Europe unless accompanied by a certain proportion of British goods. That has always seemed to me to be one of the strangest measures ever placed on the Statute-book. It passed both Houses easily, but I do not know that it was ever actually brought into operation. Although the idea of using the necessities of your fever-stricken enemy as a means of increasing your foreign trade is not an agreeable one, I do not draw from the fact that the Bill was passed, the conclusion that our grandfathers were less humane than we are, but simply that they found themselves in a very tight place and took what they conceived to be natural measures for meeting an exceptional difficulty. Consequently, if some extraordinary condition of affairs arises, and if His Majesty's Government choose to bring in a measure to meet that contingency, all we can say is that the House will no doubt consider such a measure on its merits. As I have already stated, as matters are at present I am not able to conceive or to devise a case in which a retaliatory duty could be profitably brought in, but if noble Lords opposite think differently by all means let them bring in a measure and submit it to the judgment of Parliament.

This brings me to the subject of the Motion with which I propose to conclude, viz., the methods by which it is proposed to proceed with this retaliatory policy. So far as I know, there are only three possible methods by which this can be done. It may be done, in the first instance, by bringing in a Bill stating the details of each case in which it is proposed to retaliate; or, in the other extreme, it may be done by bringing in a Bill to give general powers to His Majesty by Order in Council to impose any duties that the Government may think fit; or it may be done by a sort of compromise between those two methods—that is to say, by passing a general tariff through the House, dealing either with all possible subjects of import or with a few subjects of import, and giving the Executive power to apply that tariff at discretion. These, as it appears to me, are the only conceivable methods by which His Majesty's Government can intend to proceed. I do not propose to dwell any further on the question of proceeding by Bill in each case. I have stated my opinion that I am not able to conceive such a case, but, of course, if His Majesty's Government introduce a Bill, Parliament is bound to consider it on its merits. It is quite clear that it is impossible for the country to give what is called a mandate on a matter of this kind if the intention is to proceed by Bill, because it is impossible for the country to bind Parliament in any way to pass a particular Bill without knowing what the provisions of that Bill may be.

Now, as regards proceeding by Order in Council, there are, as many of your Lordships know, strong precedents for adopting that course. The whole history of the Navigation Laws depends upon the principle of proceeding by Order in Council. There is no need to trouble your Lordships with any description of what took place under the Navigation Laws, but I confess that I was surprised to find, on looking into the matter, that at present powers do exist by which, in cases of what is considered unfair treatment of our shipping, His Majesty's Government can by Order in Council impose countervailing duties upon foreign ships or upon goods carried in foreign ships. Those powers, which are of very long standing, have never been repealed, although the Acts in which they appear have been amended on several occasions, the last being, I believe, in the year 1876. I make noble Lords opposite a present of that fact, because it does not seem to me particularly relevant to the present issue. The fact that these powers still exist must be taken in connection with the whole history of the Navigation Laws, and accompanied by consideration of the special reasons which led Parliament to treat the shipping of this country in a more privileged manner than any other trade in the country. It is also a fact that, although, as I say, these powers have remained on the Statute-book, at any rate for the last fifty years, and, I think, for a great deal longer, no attempt has ever been made to use them, and I think one is pretty safe in declaring that in the present day no Government would venture to use them. I do not think that any Government would now venture to impose a duty of this kind under the powers which it possesses in these Customs Consolidation Acts, because the surprise which would be caused, even to a tolerably docile following in another place, would be so great that I am afraid the Government which attempted it might find the results very serious indeed to their own existence. I do not dwell any longer on this question of proceeding by Order in Council, because, so far as I was able to follow the opinion of His Majesty's Government as explained in another place, they do not propose to ask for a general power to impose duties of any magnitude and of all kinds simply by Order in Council.

Thus, there is left the third possibility as the only one; that is to say, that

Parliament should be asked to sanction a tariff on certain goods, to be applied at discretion by the Executive, if they cannot succeed in obtaining the object of their desires by negotiation. When one comes to think of it, although this sounds a more moderate scheme than that of proceeding by Order in Council, there is no very great difference between the two, for this reason. If you are going to retaliate to any purpose, you must be prepared on occasion to impose very high duties indeed. Professor Ashley, who is the great stand-by among the economists—indeed, almost the only stand-by among the economists—of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, in his very interesting book, after stating the facts relating to dumping, and the extent to which some commodities are sold under cost price in this country, goes on to say—

> "To meet such prices duties of 50 per cent. or 75 per cent. *ad valorem* may be needed, or even prohibition."

I think it stands to reason that if you are going to give the Government discretion to impose duties up to 75 per cent., or even to prohibit, there is not much object in passing a preliminary Bill. It comes to very much the same thing as if you give them general powers by Order in Council. Consequently I do not see, although this mode of proceeding might appear to be some concession to the desire which has been expressed that Parliament should have a distinct voice in the matter, that the concession would be a real, or, in any way, a valuable one. I venture to press His Majesty's Government, with great respect, for a categorical reply to the Questions I have placed on the Paper, with a view to arriving at a conclusion as to whether the opinion of your Lordships' House should be taken upon this matter. It is possible, of course, that noble Lords opposite may accept the Motion in the terms in which it appears on the Paper. If they do, nobody will be more pleased than I. If they do not, I fear we should be obliged to take the sense of your Lordships' House on the proposal. Now, I honestly confess, that I do not know in what terms His Majesty's Government are likely to meet this question. It appears to me to depend whether at the moment they appear in the character of Mr. Jekyll or in the character of Mr. Hyde. Many of your Lordships, I dare say, have read and remember that famous allegorical fantasy. Its hero or central figure used to appear as Dr. Jekyll when he wished to put on a respectable face before the world, but at other times, when he desired to indulge the biddings of his lower nature, he appeared as Mr. Hyde. At first, the transformation took place easily, and the retransformation was effected also without difficulty, but as time went on the return to the respectable appearance became more and more difficult, until at least it became impossible; and it was only by suicide that finally, fixed in the form of Mr. Hyde, the hero of the story was able to escape the vengeance of the public. The parallel between his position and the position of His Majesty's Government seems to me extraordinarily close, and I shall not be at all surprised if it is carried out to the very last chapter. More and more closely, as it seems to me, His Majesty's Government must be drawn to protection. The fact is that retaliation is not a policy. It cannot be made into a coherent policy upon which the opinion of the country can be taken. Retaliation can be nothing more than an incident. It may be an incident which some consider desirable and others think disastrous. On the other hand, protection is a policy, and it is a policy which I am afraid always has obtained and always will obtain a considerable measure of support in the country. It is, as I say, a policy towards which I believe His Majesty's Government, unless at the eleventh hour they have the courage to break with it, are being, perhaps insensibly, but still closely and pretty rapidly, drawn. That, my Lords, is a policy which we on this side of the House, and I am glad to think a good many noble Lords on the other side, are pledged to resist to the utmost. We intend to resist even the first steps which may be taken towards the abandonment of that free system under which our trade in the main has prospered, and which in addition has made this country the great commercial clearing-house of the world. I beg to move the Motion which stands in my name on the Paper.

Moved to resolve, "That no duty upon imports into the United Kingdom from foreign countries, or from British colonies and dependencies, should be imposed, modified, or removed, without the formal consent of Parliament to each such proposal."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I hope the House will not think I am putting myself unduly forward or in any way taking too much upon myself in rising at once to intervene in this debate. I think it right to say that I asked the Leader of the House whether it was intended to put up any member of His Majesty's Government to answer the noble Earl opposite, or whether it would be agreeable to them before any member of the Government spoke that I should say what I desired to say to the House on this occasion. It is in accordance with the answer I then received that I now venture to ask the House to listen to me for a short time.

I can assure the House that it is from no desire or anxiety to speak that I am here. I am actuated solely by a desire to explain to the House and to the many personal friends I have in the House, the reasons which guided me in taking the step which I thought it my duty to take during the recess. I am told that it is customary that some such explanation should be made, that it is a duty to the House in which a resigning Minister sits, and perhaps it is in no small degree due to the Minister himself. My Lords, I desire to avoid—and I think I can avoid—personal references of every kind. I certainly do not desire to make them, and although I cannot promise to avoid altogether controversial topics, I shall endeavour to treat them in such a way as to deepen and widen as little as possible the differences which may exist between those who so recently were my political colleagues and who still, I am proud to say, are without exception my personal friends. I do not ask in any formal way for the indulgence of the House. I do not share the condemnation which it is too often the custom to pass upon the method in which this House listens to those of its Members who address it. I do not agree with the somewhat severe judgment passed upon us on the first night of this session by the noble Earl who leads the House. I think we are sometimes a little unjust to ourselves in this matter, and that we make believe that we are much harder to address than is really the case. I think—and I speak, I am sorry to say, from much personal experience—that it is a kindly and tolerant audience, and that, if only the House becomes confident that one of its Members who rises to address it, has something to say and will sit down when he has said it, it is not only a kind and tolerant, but a generous and even sympathetic audience. I know I shall get the indulgence of the House, because I know that every one of your Lordships present to-night must feel that the task which lies before me cannot be a pleasant one and that it is one not altogether easy adequately to discharge. No man separates himself from colleagues with a light heart. No one willingly breaks those Party ties and Party friendships which form so large a part of the political life of this country. Certainly it is not to be done from any selfish or unworthy motive, nor is it to be done for personal convenience. If it is done at all, it must be done, in my opinion, from a sense of duty. If duty to oneself is so presented that such separation is demanded by it, and if at the same time one's conception of one's duty to the country also demands it, then I venture to say that your Lordships without exception will agree that no other consideration ought to be allowed to prevail for a moment.

What was the cause which in my opinion made it my duty to ask to be relieved of the office which I had held for some eight years? I am, of course, provided with the usual gracious permission to give any reasons that may be necessary, within the usual limits, to justify the position I took up, but I am glad to think that, at any rate on this occasion, I shall have no cause to avail myself of that permission, because I think, in fact I know, that I can find in the published speeches of the Prime Minister and of Mr. Chamberlain and in their letters sufficient in which they concur to justify the course which I thought it necessary to take. The Prime Minister in his second speech at Sheffield—his speech to the overflow meeting—used these words—

"I am one of those—I admit it—who when this topic was recently started and when it became a matter of common debate in the country would have been quite content to see it left an open question among members of the Government and among Members of the Party, but neither my colleagues in the Government nor the House of Commons nor the country would support that view."

The same statement was repeated in almost similar words at Bristol, with the addition that the Prime Minister thought that the old position should be maintained under which the fiscal question was regarded as an open question in the ranks of the Party. I quote these words not because I in any sense disagree with them as an accurate statement of the fact, but because I agree with them entirely, and because it seems to me that, in the very fact that it was thought possible for these great questions to be left open questions, one of the reasons which justify the course I took is to be found. The circumstances are not parallel. I know—I have known for years—that many of those with whom I have been acting had predilections in favour of another fiscal system. That was well enough so long as the system which prevailed in this country was accepted, but it seems to me to make all the difference when a prominent Minister proposed to reverse that system, and to bring it into discussion as a matter of practical policy. I venture to say to the House—I do not set up to be a great constitutional authority—but I do say that the established doctrine, the prevailing doctrine, the better doctrine, is that those who are responsible for a Government should speak with one voice on matters of that kind. But to understand how we really arrived at the position described by the Prime Minister, it is necessary to glance very shortly at some of the events of last summer. All your Lordships will remember that in the month of May an important speech was delivered at Birmingham. I re-read that speech the other day to refresh my memory. It had for its subject questions affecting the future of the Empire, and I will say for myself—and I believe I express the feelings of many others—that in my opinion no fair-minded man who reads that speech can deny that it is inspired by a lofty ideal or that its dominant idea was to secure a closer union within the Empire. Mr. Chamberlain no doubt expressed his disbelief in the continuance of the unity of the Empire unless it was cemented by a commercial union. He complained that some of his colleagues had refused to allow him to use the then existing corn duty for purposes of preference, and he contended that the community of sacrifice necessary for a closer union could only be got through preferential treatment in commercial matters, and he demanded then—I think it was the first occasion on which the demand was publicly made—an inquiry and discussion into these matters. I may just mention in passing—for I think it is important in regard to some of the later developments—that he then categorically said, "I am perfectly certain that I am not a protectionist." So far as complaint was made that some of his colleagues would not allow the corn duty which was then existing and about to be repealed, to be a vehicle for preference. I venture to think that, whatever may be the opinion on the larger merits of the preferential question, those of us who took that view were entirely right in the objection which we took. Whatever may be thought about it on its merits, it seemed to me then, and it seems to me still, to have been far too large a question, far too great a departure from the existing system prevailing in the country, to have been brought in, and the principle so to speak given away, by a mere clause in a Budget Bill dealing with a shilling duty on corn. I will revert again to this point in a moment, but I just want to complete my account of the history of the summer. That speech was followed by a speech in the House of Commons in which the idea of a corn duty was developed. The amount was left vague, but there was to be enough of it to provide a considerable revenue which was to be devoted to the provision of old-age pensions. Later than that, partly in speeches at the Constitutional Club, in a meeting at which I myself was present, and partly on other occasions, we found a raising up of uneasiness about the state of trade in this country, and that culminated, as all your Lordships know, in the announcement that there was to be on this important matter an inquiry or a discussion—sometimes the one word, and sometimes the other was used. This House discussed the subject. The noble Viscount behind me introduced a Motion in regard to it. Your Lordships will remember that discussion, and others in which several members of the Government took part. I myself defended the idea of an inquiry and a discussion, although I am bound to confess that though I determined to, and I hope did, approach the subject with a fair mind, I never expected that that discussion would lead me seriously to modify my attitude towards the fiscal policy of this country. Time went on, and we arrived at that period when it was necessary to settle what was to be the policy of the Government. There were then, as is perfectly well known, three main subjects of discussion. There was the question of preference to our Colonies, there was the question which is more particularly the subject of the noble Lord's Motion today—the subject of retaliation, or as, perhaps, it is more fairly and fitly termed, freedom of negotiation; and kindred to that, and alongside of it, there was the matter of "dumping" as it is called—I think the word has now been accepted into the English language —which certainly is a branch in close connection with the subject of retaliation. But at that time, neither in the Cabinet nor out of it, had we ever heard, I believe, of the average 10 per cent. duty on all imports into this country.

On the question of preference, of which the main advocate and proposer was the late Colonial Secretary, I wish to say a few words. I admit that it is not raised definitely in the Motion of the noble Earl, and I can only say what I want to say by the indulgence of the House, but my own explanation would not be complete, and I venture to think that the House itself could not fully understand the position of matters unless, by that indulgence, I am allowed to touch briefly upon some of the points involved in that question. It always seemed to me that this suggestion of a colonial preference was no light demand to make upon this country. At any rate, there can be no question whatever that it is an abandonment—a complete abandonment—of the existing fiscal policy of the country. It may not be wise to pin oneself to any particularly abstract doctrine on the subject, but I venture to say that if there is one abstract doctrine which it is less unwise to pin oneself to than another, it is that taxation should not be levied except for revenue purposes. I say that on this ground—not on account of the great authorities by which it is supported, not on account of the length of time during which it has been the accepted policy of the country, but because, in my humble opinion, as a practical policy it is the best policy for this country, on this ground if upon no other—namely, that by that principle, and under that principle, you secure the end that the burden which you lay upon the consumer or upon whoever pays the tax (it does not matter to me for the moment who it is) will be, as a whole, transferred to the Exchequer. The point, then, that we had to ask ourselves in the summer was this: "Is there anything in our present circumstances which demands this great change? Is it in the interest of this country, looked at in its widest sense, that this great change should be made? Is it above all things necessary, as is suggested to us, for the maintenance of the Empire?" My Lords, I claim humbly to be as good a friend of the cause of the maintenance of the Empire as anyone else, but I venture to say that there has been no evidence whatever presented to us that this particular change is required, or even that it would promote the unity of the Empire. I know it is alleged upon great authority—upon the authority of Mr. Chamberlain, who, in my opinion, has rendered very great services—but I am not prepared, upon a matter of this kind, to accept or to advocate such a change, upon any authority, unless evidence in support of that authority can be adduced. I venture to add in proof of the fact that I desired to consider this with an open mind, that I asked certain questions, the object of which was to find out what amount of trade with the self-governing colonies it would be possible to acquire under a preferential system, and precisely what we were expected to do, or to bind ourselves to do, to get that trade. I was told that was not a wise way to approach the question. I was told that it would be an insult to the Colonies, that it would be improper, at any rate, to ask the Colonies to commit themselves until we had shown a readiness to meet them at least half-way. I was also told that we should be rejecting offers which had been made to us, unless we took the course that was proposed. I have never been satisfied that anything which could properly be described as an offer on the part of those who are authorised to make an offer, has really been transmitted to this country. I know there have been statements by individuals; I know there have been aspirations that it would be desirable to have a preferential system, and to bind the different parts of the Empire more closely together by that means, but I think it is stretching language and going beyond the actual facts of the case, to say that anything that could fairly be described as an offer in this matter has ever been made to this country. At any rate, I venture to say that if such exist, it would materially assist our deliberations if the actual text of those offers were communicated in a formal and deliberate manner to Parliament, in order that they might be considered upon their merits. I certainly would be glad, as I am sure many of your Lordships would also, to give such consideration to them. I venture to say, however, that it is a great deal more than doubtful whether this commercial union would be a better basis of union than the ties that already exist. I think the danger of differences would be very great. The case with us is not parallel with that of either the United States or Germany. We have no one authority which could settle the fiscal policy of the country. In the far future we may have such an authority, but it is perfectly certain that we have not got it at the present time; and until we have it, I venture to think that the danger of differences would be greater than with the complete freedom which we at present possess. I do not want to weary our Lordships with quotations, but on 20th August, a speech was made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada—who, if there is a real Imperialist amongst our colonial statesmen, is that one—and in that speech he said—

> "Canada values too highly the system which made her what she is, to consent willingly to part with any portion of it for whatever consideration, or even for the maintenance of the British Empire. I think it would be a most evil thing if any of our colonies were to consent to part with any of their legislative independence, nor do I believe that in order to make such an arrangement of a commercial nature as I have spoken of some time ago, we should be called upon to make any sacrifices of dignity or independence."

We must make a sacrifice of freedom, and the Colonies must make a sacrifice of freedom, if they are to bind themselves by any arrangement whatever, of the nature which has been indicated.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

There is one more point in connection with that matter to which I would allude. We are asked for a mandate, but it has never been authoritatively stated what is to be the extent or limit of the mandate which we are asked to give. It is suggested that the mandate should authorise, as I understand it, negotiations for a preference, with a duty of 2s., or something of that kind. But there is no security at all that that sum would be sufficient. What sort of a position would we be in, if in a year or two, after negotiations had been taking place, and after this mandate had been given, we found that a 2s. duty was not sufficient, and we had to make it 4s. or 5s.? What would be the position of this country? We should be asked: "Are you really going to sacrifice the Empire for the mere difference between 3s. and 5s.? Is a difference of 3s. to make the difference between unity and separation?" The only safe course to take is not to commit this country until you know the limit to which you are likely to be asked to go, not to depart from the principles which have regulated the policy of the country for so many years until the extent of the journey that you are asked to travel can be defined. We are now told that before a mandate can be asked for this proposal, there are to be two, or perhaps three, general elections. I do not know whether that is to be so or not, but if it is, is not that fact in itself a most complete and absolute justification of the line which those took who refused to allow the Government, and, so far as we could help it, the country and Parliament to be committed upon this question before any election at all had taken place? I pass from that; I will say no more about it; I am not going to discuss the question of which Minister was committed to this policy; it is certainly not my business to do that; it is sufficient for me that these things were before the Government, and that it was suggested that they were to be open questions. In my opinion, for those of us who are not able to accept the policy, it was impossible on that ground that we should continue to be members of the Government.

I pass to the question of retaliation or freedom of negotiation. It will not be difficult to show that the question is in a somewhat different position now from what it was in those days. I certainly have no doubt in my own mind that such arguments were used in support of it, and that such admissions were wanted about it, that if, so far as the arguments were concerned, we had admitted them, or if, so far as the admissions were wanted, we had made them, we should have been logically committed to a very large departure indeed from the principles of free trade. If I wanted a proof of that fact I could allude to the exact language used at Sheffield, where it was announced that the policy to be recommended to the country was to be a reversal of the existing policy, and subsequently at Bristol, where it was announced to be a great and serious change. On one point I do not agree with the noble Earl who spoke a few moments ago. I do not believe that it is fair to say that the Prime Minister is in any sense an advocate of protection. He has uniformly—publicly, and, I may say, privately—argued in favour of this policy, as a means of getting what he calls freer trade. I therefore feel bound to say that I do not think the remark which was made can fairly be applied to him.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I do not think I ever described the Prime Minister as being an advocate of protection. I said he was being drawn towards it.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: Of course I accept the correction, but even in its modified form I do not think it is accurate. My recollection of what the Prime Minister has said in public and in private is to this effect, that if his policy involved a sort of flavour of protection, it was to be accounted as one of the disadvantages of the policy rather than as one of its advantages, and that he was not going for this policy because it was protective, but that he did not think its protective flavour was so great a disadvantage as to deter him from endeavouring to get the benefits which he hoped to obtain. I hope I am stating it correctly, but I am only endeavouring to state it in order to say that I do not agree with the position thus taken up, because I think the protective flavour which is about some of the proposals that are made, is so disadvantageous that the disadvantages overbalance any advantages that might possibly obtain from them. I want to say this: I did not understand in August, and I do not understand now, if the policy of liberty of negotiation is to go no further than seems to be fashionable at this moment, why any mandate for it is required—if it is to be under the control of Parliament, as I understand is now admitted, although there seems to be some hesitation in accepting the control of Parliament in every case. That is, as I understand, what happened in another place, but I am looking to this debate for light on that point. What I want to press on the House and upon the Government is that retaliation in itself is, as the noble Lord opposite has said, not really a final policy. It is an act of commercial war. I am not prepared to exclude war as a matter of policy either from wider politics, or from commercial concerns, but if it is really the case that those who are in favour of this policy are heart and soul intending to use it for the purposes of getting freer trade, then I would look at any rate with a tolerant eye upon it. But what made me doubtful in the autumn, and caused me to feel that I could not continue to advocate it, was not only the want of limitation, the want of actual definition of the objects and the methods which were set before the Government, but the fact, as I have said, that arguments in favour of it were used which seemed to me to lead to the direct reversal of the traditional policy of this country. It is a different thing to express a willingness to support those whom you trust on general grounds, even if you do not thoroughly understand at the moment everything they are proposing, than to remain a member of the Government undertaking to advocate a policy which you do not fully understand, and of which, as in this case, you have doubts as to the practical efficacy. This may be, as I have said, a free-trade policy for free-traders, but I have great doubts whether it is really a policy which, taken by itself, can effect the object in view. I hope before this debate closes the Government will tell us with absolute distinctness how they propose to carry this policy into effect. What do they intend to retaliate upon. We are told absolutely distinctly that their programme does not extend to the taxation of food or of raw materials. But are raw materials and food to be subject to retaliation? If they are, that is an extremely serious step, but if they are not, the revolver of which the noble Marquess spoke last summer will, in a great majority of cases, be an extremely harmless weapon, and he might as well load it with snipe shot and take it for the pursuit of big game in Central Africa.

But I have another difficulty. This policy may be a free-trade policy for free-traders, but I am speaking in the presence of some who do not regard it as a step towards freer trade, but as a step—perhaps a very short step, as some of them say, which is so insignificant as to be almost contemptible—leading to another and a very different policy. I hope His Majesty's Government will make it clear that they do not intend to be dragged along that path. Some of them I think, if I may say so in all friendliness, have gone rather too far along it at the present time. But I do not want to press matters too much, and I shall be only too glad to have an assurance that that is not to be the policy of His Majesty's Government. I recognise the difficulty of asking them for a concrete case in regard to the subject of retaliation, but there is this kindred subject of dumping. There are no international questions involved in that. Could not the Government mention some one of the trades which are especially affected, and which they desire to protect from dumping? Surely in regard to that we might have one or two concrete cases—cases put forward, not with the exaggeration of Party warfare, or, if I may say so without offence, with all the clap-trap of political oratory, but cases carefully selected, thoroughly investigated, and presented to Parliament in a form in which they can be discussed in a serious and anxious spirit. I admit that the difficulty and intricacy of the question is very great, but every trade which is distressed is not the victim of dumping, nor is every individual in every trade which is distressed the victim of dumping. These things require the most careful and anxious investigation. It is almost impossible without personal inquiry by some agent to get at all the facts in every case. I have no doubt that most of your Lordships have read the chapter in the fiscal Blue-book which deals with dumping. There was attached to it, when first circulated, an explanatory memorandum by somebody at the Board of Trade—I really do not know whom—but it was an exceedingly clever and good statement of the difficulties of getting at the truth in this matter. It was not intended that it should be circulated, because it was part of the canon of making up that book that nothing but facts—no individual opinion of any sort—was to be put forward. I think that was a wise rule under the circumstance; at any rate I myself was a party to it, and I make no complaint whatever about it. But this particular Paper to which I refer, although not circulated at the time, seemed to me so worthy of consideration that I would venture to ask His Majesty's Government whether they would consult the President of the Board of Trade with a view to publishing hereafter that Paper, upon the understanding that no member of the Government is committed to the opinions expressed. It seems to me that it would be so useful a guide that it would be for the advantage of Parliament and the country in considering this subject that that Paper should be in the hands of a much wider circle than at the present time.

But I come to what is to me a graver matter still, and that is the average 10 per cent. duty all-round. I know quite well that I shall be told that is not a part of the policy of His Majesty's Government at the present time. But can we be told distinctly by a representative of the Government from his place in Parliament what is the attitude of the Government towards it? I know it is not their policy, but are their convictions settled in regard to it. How can we be sure that it never will be their policy? As I have said, I am afraid that some members of the Government have accepted it and have protectionist leanings. I make that no subject of reproach, for I recognise the right of everybody to have their own opinions upon that matter. I think, however, that, in a subject of such importance, Parliament and the country have a right to know what is the settled policy of the Government in regard to it.

I venture to say that the country is thinking more about that at this moment than it is about the mere policy, the official policy, of the Government. I am afraid that too many of the supporters of the Government regard that as the most important part of tariff reform. Supposing the sympathy which is now expressed for this policy is translated into practical shape, and supposing we find at a subsequent time that a majority of those with whom we would like to act, find themselves in fact committed to that policy. I know quite well that it is unusual to give an illustration in this House, but there is a story going round at the present time which very well illustrates my position in this matter. I am told that a short time ago an American couple landed at Liverpool, and upon arrival at that port the husband received a message that his mother-in-law had died, within the last few days, while they were crossing the Atlantic, and he was asked to telegraph an answer to the message stating whether she should be buried, cremated, or embalmed. The husband went to the Post Office and telegraphed the following reply—

> "Better try all three: take no risks."

That policy of protection is one, with which, so far as I am concerned, I am not prepared to take any risks, and what I am afraid of is that it will swallow up every other policy which is put before the country, and that it will be a sort of Aaron's Rod, which will devour every other question which comes into our public life so long as it remains there. The Government may not like it, and they may even shut their eyes to the fact, but I believe that it is that policy which is really before the country at the present time, and, that being so, I say, in my humble opinion, that the present position in which some of us are placed is not altogether a fair one. It is not fair to those of us who are loyal Unionists, and who remain free-traders to be left in the state of difficulty and uncertainty in which we are placed at the present time. I also venture to say that it is not altogether fair to Parliament itself. I am certain it is not fair to the constituencies who ought, in a matter of this kind, to have a clear and distinct lead from those who are the leaders of the people; and I am not quite sure that it is quite fair to the members of His Majesty's Government themselves. In spite of the precedent of the Home Rule Bill, which is sometimes put forward, I say that this state of uncertainty is, in my opinion, contrary to the best traditions of our public life. One of the things that public men are distinguished for in this country is that we take a definite line, make it clear, and stand up and argue for it, and after declaring our opinions we take the consequences of them whatever they may be. Upon this question we must stand somewhere, and as far as I am concerned I am profoundly convinced that any departure from the policy of free trade or free imports, if you like to call it by that name, will be the first real blow to the prosperity of our British commerce; and that, so far from cementing the union of our Empire, it will render that union more difficult to maintain because it will be more complicated; and while holding these opinions I claim to be one who is as loyal a supporter o the unity of the Empire as any of His Majesty's Ministers themselves.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: There is a special reason why I should ask the kind indulgence of the House, because it is not only the first time that I address your Lordships, but the first time that I have spoken with the dignity of a representative of the inner circle of the Government; and last, but not least, I am called upon to follow two noble Earls of tried and approved skill in your Lordships' debates, and to do what I can to satisfy your Lordships that the policy which has been criticised and attacked can be fully justified. I think all of us who sit upon this side of the House listened to the speech of my noble friend who has just sat down with feelings of the greatest sympathy. If I may echo his words I would say that he remains a friend, and I wish he had remained a colleague also. He has addressed your Lordships in a tone of such moderation that I shall feel it beyond my duty to criticise what he has said in any very hostile manner. Indeed to a large extent, my Lords, he was in agreement with His Majesty's Government. Upon retaliation he evidently thought that there was a great deal to be said in favour of it under certain circumstances and limited to certain conditions. I admit that the noble Lord did not go so far as we do in regard to retaliation, but with respect to the rest I really see no difference between ourselves and my noble friend. He spoke of this as being an open question when he left the Government. As far as I am aware it is an open question in the Government now. He also spoke of protection. Protection forms no part of the policy of His Majesty's Government. I do not pretend myself to have any prejudices on the subject, but protection appears to me to involve that everything should be dearer, while on the other hand there appears to be no reason to suppose that anyone would be richer. Therefore, my Lords, that policy is unacceptable. At any rate it forms no part of the policy of His Majesty's Government. But, my Lords, our agreement with the noble Lord goes further. He has referred to what has taken place in another place with regard to the policy of preference. There is no question about preference for it forms no part of the policy of the Government. And lastly we are not here to defend the policy of a very distinguished statesman, I mean Mr. Chamberlain, but we are here to defend our own proposals and nothing else. I noticed that the noble Earl at the commencement of his speech seemed to intimate that he was only going to discuss our proposals, but I appeal to your Lordships whether he did not extend his purview far beyond that strict limit. I think he called upon us to defend a certain duty, namely, the quinine duty, passed in the year 1808. Then he discoursed at some length upon the Navigation Laws, and lastly he went in great detail into Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, which he seemed to know a great deal more about than I do myself. We are not here to defend any of those things. Speaking personally, I do not agree with Mr. Chamberlain, but I confess I do not think that any very great advantage is gained by the kind of language which the noble Earl used in reference to those who do agree with Mr. Chamberlain, for they are not mountebanks, and I do not think an expression of that kind is appropriate in the least to the very many distinguished men who share Mr. Chamberlain's views.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I must be allowed to explain that my allusion was to those who had been in the habit of giving magic lantern lectures and other entertainments in constituencies in which by-elections have taken place. My allusion did not in any way apply to those gentlemen who speak on the public platforms.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I am glad that I have succeeded in obtaining from the noble Earl that explanation. I do not think he is so familiar with elections as I am, but if he were he would know that, even from the point of view of Liberal candidates, magic lanterns are not unusual, and they are often introduced by the friends of the noble Lord to persuade the electors that we are in the wrong and they are in the right. Noble Lords who have spoken seem very anxious to have the details of the policy of His Majesty's Government. I am very much obliged to them for having suggested to us a great number of different policies which we might adopt, but I am not going, nor is anyone on this Bench going, to inform this House what the details of the policy will be, which it will be our duty to propose to Parliament should we be successful at the next election. These details must depend upon a great number of different circumstances. [A NOBLE LORD: Upon whether you are successful?] Yes, they must depend upon whether we are successful, or not, as the noble Lord opposite says. They must depend in the second place upon what the action of foreign Governments may be, and over that we have, of course, no control. I think I may be forgiven for not thinking it necessary to defend the details of the policy of His Majesty's Government, that is the policy of negotiation and retaliation, because the noble Earl and his friends are not yet convinced of the principle. Why should we be at the pains, now, to elaborate the details of a policy of retaliation and negotiation when it is perfectly evident that the noble Earl and his friends would not accept such a policy whatever the details might be? What we shall do when the proper time comes is this, we shall appeal to the electors of this country to say "Aye" or "No" to the question whether they are in favour of a policy of negotiation and retaliation or not, and upon their decision the subsequent details of this controversy must depend.

I now turn to the Motion of the noble Earl which is before your Lordships at this moment. That Motion has evidently been drawn with great care, and I should like to compliment the noble Earl upon the ingenuity with which it has been drafted. It is so elaborate, and has so many limitations and conditions, that it would be more worthy of a conveyancer guarding against a possibility of some fraudulent misuse of a trust, than a Motion submitted to your Lordships' House. It is, in fact, obvious that the noble Lord and his friends are hostile to the policy of the Government, and that they have so little trust in the Government that they desire to bind them down to the smallest detail. It is, therefore, a vote of want of confidence in His Majesty's Government, and as such we shall resist it. It is, if I may say so with great respect, rather a remarkable Motion to submit to your Lordships' House, for it does not deal with matters which are generally the subject of our detailed consideration. It has to do with the fiscal policy of the country; it has to do with the limitations upon the taxing power of Parliament which are generally discussed rather in the other House than in this. I hardly like, after what I have said, to dwell upon the wording of the Motion, but I should, however, like to say that the word "each" in the last line, although its object is quite obvious, is rather unmeaning It is well known that no proposal in regard to taxation can be enacted in this country without the assent of Parliament being given to such proposal. That is involved, of course, in the prerogatives and privileges which Parliament possesses. Then the words of the Motion go a long way. The noble Lord, although he talked at great length about the policy of the Government and about the policy of Mr. Chamberlain, did not go into details as to the meaning of his own Motion, and the word "proposals" seem to go a very long way, because certainly, unless it is very carefully explained, it would almost seem to preclude the Government from entering into any negotiations without the leave of Parliament, which they obviously must do in many cases. They must enter into the necessary preliminary negotiations before Parliament could be asked to allow them to use the weapon of retaliation to enforce the policy which those negotiations were intended to secure.

Under those circumstances, my Lords, I have to acquaint your Lordships with the method in which His Majesty's Government intend to treat this Motion. We are as anxious as any of your Lordships to safeguard the rights of Parliament, and we are fully aware that Parliament is sensitive, and very rightly sensitive, upon any proposals or any policy which would have as their object or their effect the invasion of the privileges and prerogatives of Parliament over the taxation of this country. We are not going to oppose any such words in the noble Lord's Motion as would involve that proposition, but we prefer to put our meaning into words of our own, and I shall move on behalf of the Government an Amendment to the noble Earl's Motion in the following terms—

> "This House, while affirming the constitutional doctrine that all fiscal arrangements of this country must be subject to the full and effective control of Parliament over taxation, is not prepared to lay down rules for the guidance of future Parliaments as to the exact method in which such control should be exercised by them in cases which may hereafter arise."

Now let me say one or two words upon the discussion and upon the policy of the Government as I have stated it to be. I think that the great difficulty which stands in the way of the critics of the Government is that they are all bound to admit that the state of trade in this country is not altogether satisfactory. Is that denied? Are any of your Lordships prepared to say that the state of trade in this country is wholly satisfactory? It is obviously not the case, and it has been frankly admitted both in this House and in another place that the state of trade is not wholly satisfactory. Mr. Morley frankly admitted, only the other night, that he had repeatedly called attention to the unsatisfactory condition of trade, and the noble Earl who leads the Opposition, on the first night of this session, himself gave utterance to a similar sentiment.

EARL SPENCER: With regard to competition, I said that we were in very keen competition with other nations and that we had not education sufficient to combat that competition.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl, I think, admitted that some changes might be necessary, and I gather that the changes he would desire are not what we would desire. We go further than the noble Earl. Just as Mr. Morley admits in another place, the noble Earl admits that changes are necessary. I notice the noble Earl who opened this discussion seemed to admit also that some changes were necessary, and that he even went so far as to convey that retaliation might be useful as a means of promoting the trade of this country. If the noble Earls opposite have taken that view, so also have right hon. Gentlemen and noble Lords who belong to what is called the free-food section of politics in this country. Your Lordships are no doubt aware that Sir M. Hicks Beach admitted in the strongest and most emphatic manner, not only that the state of trade was unsatisfactory, but that retaliation was an appropriate and becoming method of resisting the aggression of foreign powers and thereby improving the state of our trade. I was glad also to notice that the noble Duke who sits below the gangway, the Duke of Devonshire, not only admitted that there was a call for change, but he even went so far as to confess that his own view of retaliation had been modified since he left the Cabinet, and modified in the direction of thinking that retaliation was more useful than he had at that time thought. Speaking at Liverpool, he said that the policy of the Government might be summed up as asking for the power of negotiation and retaliation, and he went on to say that, while he did not believe so firmly as the Prime Minister did in the probable efficacy of such a policy, he was more disposed than before to approve of the object of that policy.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Yes, the object.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I think the natural meaning of his words was that he saw more in the policy of retaliation than he had done at a previous period. I think I may sum up the situation as far as I have gone to this extent. It is admitted, practically on all hands, that the state of trade and especially the state of our export trade to protective countries is not satisfactory. Many of those who do not see eye to eye with the Government are yet prepared to admit that there is something in the policy of retaliation, and I think that is a considerable step forward. I venture to say that if anyone had been rash enough, two or three years ago, to have asked any of the noble Lords whose opinions I have quoted whether they would look, even to that extent, kindly upon the policy of retaliation, they would have repudiated such a suggestion. And when we find people blaming us for the extent to which the present agitation has gone—and I regret it equally with many of your Lordships—when they condemn it, I wonder whether they really put the blame altogether upon the right shoulders. Surely those statesmen sitting on both sides who obstinately shut their eyes to the obvious signs of the times, and, although they admit trade is bad, are determined that nothing will induce them to do anything to better it; who admit that the policy of foreign countries towards our own country is unfair, and yet will not stretch forth a finger to induce those foreign countries to give us better terms—I say that those statesmen are more responsible than anyone else for the length to which the present agitation has gone. People say it is all Mr. Chamberlain, but what nonsense; Mr. Chamberlain is a man of great eminence, but even a man of his great eminence could not produce the effect that has been produced unless public opinion had been undermined altogether already, and it has been undermined because there is a profound feeling of resentment at the manner in which we have been treated by foreign countries, and that resentment extends to all classes and is even more widely extended in area than your Lordships are yet aware of. It is a determination that they will not sit quiet under such aggression, but they will resent and resist it with those weapons which come most readily to their hands. It is the unconvinced Toryism of noble Lords opposite which has brought us to this pass, it is their stick-in-the-mud policy, and their defence of the privileges and exactions of foreign countries, which have made such a large number of people in this country quite unmanageable, and has driven them to an extremity of feeling which I, in common with noble Earls opposite, regret.

I do not wish to detain your Lordships too long, but I desire to say one or two words upon these specific arguments against the principles of retaliation which have been advanced by the noble Earl. He said that the imposition of retaliatory duties would give a fictitious value to certain industries, that it would lead to the investment of capital, which upon the remission of those duties would be jeopardised, and he said that was a serious blemish upon the policy of retaliation. I anticipate no such result from the policy of the Government as that which has been forecast by the noble Earl. It would be the avowed policy of the Government, if they did impose retaliatory duties, that they were only to remain so long as was necessary in order to induce the country with which we were dealing to alter its tariff in our favour. I may retort upon the noble Earl that this fictitious value given to industry, and which leads to an investment of money which is thereby prejudiced, is precisely what happens in consequence of the bounties given by foreign countries. We had an instance of that only last year. At that time, as your Lordships well remember, we were engaged in considering the bounties upon sugar which had been granted by foreign European countries. One of the main objections to those bounties was that the industries which were created in consequence of those bounties rested upon a wholly fictitious basis. It was stated that the various industries which took advantage of bounty-fed sugar had grown very much, and that they had been established upon a basis which really was at the mercy of the foreign Power who gavethe bounties, and that when the proper time came and all opposition had been crushed out, the foreign country would remove the bounty, and having secured the monopoly of the raw material would then proceed to crush the industry which relied upon this fictitious foundation. Then, my Lords, there was another argument put forward by the noble Earl, who seemed to say that the high tariffs of a foreign country were a positive advantage to this country. He said there had been certain high tariffs imposed by Germany, but I did not catch exactly when. It is not, however, difficult to find an example of high tariffs imposed by Germany. He contended that the consequence had been a great increase in the manufacture of a certain commodity, and he spoke of people working night and day in this country to throw that commodity into the German market just before that tariff came into force, and he seemed to think that that was a benefit to ourselves. In my opinion it is that very uncertainty of industry which is so bad for us. A sudden increase of that kind forcing an industry to work night and day and inducing it to temporarily increase its plant to cope with the trade, is, in my opinion, precisely what ought to be avoided for the steady prosperous increase of any industry.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am afraid I have not made my argument clear. In 1879, when the German tariff was about to come into operation, we worked night and day in Yorkshire to flood the German market with woollen goods before that tariff actually came into operation. Consequently I say that if we put on a tariff, during the period before this came into operation our market would be flooded by German goods, and the Germans would work day and night to come in with their goods before the tariff came into operation. It would consequently be some considerable time before the protected industry in England gained any advantage from the tariff we impose, and owing to that delay it might do damage to the industry to take the duty off at short notice.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It is quite evident from that argument that the advantage to Germany would only be of a very temporary character. I will not pursue that argument any farther, but I will go into rather close detail as to what might be the future methods we might adopt to cope with the difficulties which the noble Earl has suggested. The most important argument which he used was that other countries had tried retaliation and that it had failed. I do not agree with the noble Earl, and if he will read more closely than he has apparently done, the history of the negotiations and actions of foreign countries in relation to tariffs with their neighbours, he would not come to that conclusion. One thing is quite certain, that every foreign country believes in retaliation. They all habitually use the method of retaliation for the purpose of securing advantages for their own industries. The noble Earl himself, I think, must agree that it is a very powerful weapon, for he seemed terrified, if I may use such a word, at the effect upon this country if other countries resented our retaliation. He declared that they would themselves respond to retaliation, and that the effect would be very formidable in this country. If he himself is aware, and quite rightly, that the action of foreign countries would have such an effect upon us as to be a motive, in his opinion, to govern our policy, why is it surprising that other countries should think the same? I am perfectly confident that other countries are watching the discussion in Parliament and the country with the greatest attention at this moment, and they are well aware that, commanding as we do this great free market, it is in our power, by a judicious use of the weapon of retaliation, to inflict upon them penalties of a very severe character, penalties which they will be obliged to recognise and to give us better terms in consequence. So much for the specific grounds on which the noble Earl objects to retaliation in principle.

There is another argument which has been used in this debate. I think the noble Earl, and certainly my noble friend who has just sat down, has said that if you only mean this by retaliation, why is it necessary for you to get what is called a mandate from the country? Why don't you make your proposals to Parliament and have done with it? The question as to how great a departure from our previous practice, in regard to this policy of retaliation, is to be made is a matter of opinion. In my opinion it is a very large departure from our previous practice, but in order to show your Lordships how large a departure it is, let me consider a certain Act of Parliament to which I have already referred in my remarks. Take the Sugar Convention question and the Sugar Convention Act. That is a very valuable precedent for the policy of His Majesty's Government, but it does not go far enough, and I should like, if the House will bear with me for a moment or two, to explain why it does not go far enough. In the first place, the Sugar Convention and its consequences did not depend upon the initiative of this country. The initiative was taken by foreign countries; and I think it will be conceded that there is no reason whatever why any policy of retaliation in this country should be so limited. There is no reason why we should wait for the initiative of foreign countries. Let me say also that, above all, it is important that this country should not be hampered by any such conditions in the policy of retaliation as that. The great thing, above everything else, is to persuade other countries that you are in earnest and able to use the weapon. It has always appeared to me that the greatest advantage of this policy of retaliation is more of a preventive than a cure. It is the knowledge which other countries have or will have, supposing the Government are supported in this policy, that we are no longer passive in this matter, that we are able to resist, and that we are determined, in certain circumstances, to resist, which will make them pause before they carry out a policy of commercial aggression against us. There was another feature in the Sugar Convention. It was not merely that the initiative did not come from us, but we did not act alone. We thought it necessary to wait until we had got other countries to act with us, before we used the weapon. That appears to me to be a wholly unnecessary limitation in regard to the power of retaliation. As has been remarked in another place by Sir M. Hicks Beach, we saw, in the course of the discussion at Brussels, how very great the power of this country was. Your Lordships all know that, as a matter of fact, practically it was the power and influence of England which really carried the Sugar Convention through. Under these circumstances it appears to us quite unnecessary, in the future, to wait for other countries to move. We should desire not only to be able to take the initiative ourselves but to act by ourselves upon our own strength and upon our own resources. Then again the Sugar Convention only had to do with bounties. It was only an agreement for the purpose of putting down bounties on sugar, but we should certainly, if we got authority from this country to use the weapon of retaliation, use it not only against bounties but where need be and upon proper occasions against hostile tariffs as well. And lastly, the only weapon which the Sugar Convention permitted this country to use, or at any rate the only weapon which the Sugar Convention Act permitted us to use, was the weapon of prohibition, of total prohibition, which would evidently be inappropriate in most cases, and which therefore seems to me a wholly unnecessary limitation upon this policy of retaliation. I daresay more of these could be pointed out, but I have pointed out a great number of particulars in which the precedent of the Sugar Convention and the Sugar Convention Act is wholly inadequate in order to carry out the policy which His Majesty's Government would have in view when they submit their policy to the country at the next general election. I think the precedent of the Sugar Convention Act which I have quoted, is valuable in another direction because it shows in a most emphatic form how anxious the Government were not, in any way, to interfere with the control of Parliament over the taxation and fiscal policy of this country. I do not ask your Lordships to take it from me that the Sugar Convention and its history describe the details or correspond to the details of the policy of retaliation such as His Majesty's Government will put forward. Probably it would have to go much further than that, but I think it does show that the Government were, last year, fully aware of the necessity respecting the control of Parliament over taxation and that the same spirit which dictated our action then will dictate any other action which we may think it necessary to take in the future.

My Lords, we have been asked, as I have said, why we do not submit a concrete case to Parliament? Such a procedure would no doubt have many advantages, but I think it would have many disadvantages as well. How can we enter into negotiations with foreign countries until we know what the true mind of this country is on the subject? I recollect, when I was at the Foreign Office, being instrumental in suggesting to the Government of Switzerland that they should modify to some extent a commercial tariff which they were then engaged in promulgating, and which was, in some of its articles, very disadvantageous to this country. As a mere personal opinion, I ventured to point out that, if the aggressive policy of foreign countries continued, it was just possible, reading as I tried to do the signs of the times, that the patience of this country would be exhausted, and that a more vigorous reply might ultimately be expected. But the Swiss Government did not believe what we said. If I remember rightly, they almost laughed at the idea. They said "Oh, Great Britain will never depart from the placid attitude which has become the greatest characteristic of its commercial policy, and we shall pay no attention whatever to your remonstrances or to your anticipations." It is precisely that view, upon the Continent, which is so dangerous to the industries of this country. That is the reason why before entering into negotiations the Government desire to have the country behind them.

My Lords, that is, therefore, the policy which we shall submit to the electors. We may fail, my Lords. If we fail, then another Government will take our place, and right hon. Gentlemen and noble Lords opposite will have to deal with the difficult state of trade which they themselves have admitted. They will have to find some other remedy for the reduction of hostile tariffs if they reject the one we have submitted. But if we succeed, my Lords, if we succeed at the general election, whenever that may be, then we shall be in a position to speak with our enemies in the gate, and we shall have behind us, not merely the good wishes and support of the Conservative and Unionist Party, but also the emphatic declaration of the electors at the poll that they no longer will accept the perfectly passive attitude, but are prepared to support the Government in a policy of negotiation, and a policy of retaliation, not as a matter of bluff, but as a real and effective weapon, to be used upon such occasions as may properly offer.

My Lords, it is in that spirit that we must oppose a Resolution, of which the obvious intention is to hamper the Government, in the future, in carrying out the policy which they have avowed, and we propose to substitute for it the Resolution I have read to the House, which recommends in the fullest terms the complete and effective control of Parliament, but repudiates the limitations which the noble Earl seeks to place upon the proceedings of a future Parliament.

Amendment moved—

"'To leave out the words after 'that' for the purpose of inserting the following words, 'This House, while affirming the constitutional doctrine that all fiscal arrangements of this country must be subject to the full and effective control of Parliament over taxation, is not prepared to lay down rules for the guidance of future Parliaments as to the exact method in which such control should be exercised by them in cases which may hereafter rise.'"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I am glad to think that, at the outset of what I am about to say, I am able to voice the opinion of the whole House when I say that it is with great pleasure and interest that we have listened to the speech of the noble Marquess who has just spoken. It is his first speech, delivered from the same place from which we so often heard his distinguished father. My Lords, the noble Marquess's father has, and long will have, a strong hold on the memory and affection of this House. The noble Marquess comes to this House with a strong prepossession in his favour, and I can wish him no more than that he may attain, in some large measure, to the fame and reputation which his father gained in this House.

Now, my Lords, I am glad also to be able to welcome the noble Marquess as a free-trader. He has made a most distinct declaration that he, at any rate, is not in favour of protection. He even went so far to say that it would make everything dearer. Well, there again I am in agreement with him. But I cannot quite agree with him in what he went on to say—namely, that it would make no one richer. I believe, on the contrary, that some favoured persons would be richer, and that, with the exception of these favoured classes, the rest of the population of this country would be considerably poorer. My Lords, the noble Marquess then went on to find fault with my noble friend Lord Crewe for calling upon His Majesty's Government to define their proposals, and said that, in spite of his having made that appeal, he had proceeded to criticise proposals which were not those of His Majesty's Government. I do not think any blame attaches to my noble friend for having taken that course, because he, like the rest of us, is in that position. We really have not the faintest conception what the proposals of Government are. The noble Marquess told us that, in due course, the proposals of His Majesty's Government would be announced, and that they would be announced after the next general election; that when the noble Marquess and his friends were returned to power they would then be good enough to come down to Parliament and say what they proposed to do. That seems to me to be one of the most extraordinary proposals to put before the country, that I ever heard of. My own idea is that if their proposals are not made a little clearer before the general election takes place, then the noble Lords will have a very small chance of being in a position to declare these proposals to an expectant Parliament after the general election has taken place. Then the noble Marquess said that my noble friend was rather presumptuous in bringing this Resolution before the House, because it did not pertain to subjects which were generally brought before the House. I entirely repudiate that proposition. I say that there is nothing that affects the country that is not, and cannot be, brought before the House, and upon which the decision of this House cannot be taken. It is perfectly true that we in this House cannot make changes in a money Bill, but we can reject a money Bill, and I think that one of the very objects of my noble friend's Resolution is to retain to this House the power to reject any of these proposals, if they are brought before it, because he asks that each one of these proposals should be separately brought before Parliament. It would be perfectly open to this House to reject any one of these proposals if it were brought before the House separately. I quite admit that there would be a difficulty if the proposals are to be brought up in a lump, in a single money Bill once in a year; then, I think, this House is damnified. I think my noble friend is therefore quite right in asking for separate proposals.

I am afraid that I am somewhat incapable of criticising the Amendment, which the noble Marquess has moved, as I have not read its terms. So far as I was able to gather its purport, it seemed to me, to leave the whole subject absolutely open. It professes to reserve the full effective control of Parliament, but at the same time the Government is not prepared to declare any policy whatever. In fact, what the Resolution asks for is that the present Government should be given a blank cheque in order to propose what they like at some future time, after a general election has taken place. My Lords, the noble Marquess stated that all of us on these Benches, we who have spoken here and in the other House, are against retaliation. I believe we are against retaliation. But the noble Marquess differs entirely in his opinion from the noble Marquess who leads this House and who is sitting next to him on the Government Bench. I remember on the first day of the present session the noble Lord (the Marquess of Lansdowne) taunted us with the fact that in all our speeches we had kept a saving clause with regard to retaliation, and that he had noticed that that particular saving clause was the one received with the most vociferous cheering on the part of our friends. This is only another case of the extreme difference of opinion which exists on all sorts of subjects between the noble Lords on the opposite Benches. My Lords, the noble Marquess said that all these troubles and all this agitation proceeded not from the Government, not from the friends of the Government, but entirely from what he was pleased to call the unconvinced Toryism of we who sit on this Bench and our friends. I admit that our Toryism is of a very unconvinced character. I want to know how the noble Marquess can pretend to throw upon us the responsibility of all these things, when he and his friends, who have been in office since 1886, for fifteen out of eighteen years, have had an opportunity of realising what the dangers were, and what the fearful injuries done to us by foreign nations were, and yet, having had all this time to realise that, will not tell us even now what remedy they propose, but tell us to wait till after the general election takes place upon some issue. I suppose we are to be allowed to place the issue before the electors. I really must again press to know what is the Government policy. So far as I am able to judge it may be described as *Quot homines, tot sententiæ*—so many Ministers, so many opinions. My Lords we have tried very hard to find out what are the opinions of the Government and of His Majesty's Ministers. It is not for me to enter into the domestic quarrels of the Government. I know it is a dangerous thing to intervene in domestic quarrels. Generally the quarrelers agree to fall on the people who intervene. That is a very good way of bringing about a certain reconciliation, so I am not attempting to intervene. But this I do know, that the effect of these quarrels or differences has been to strew the Back Benches of the two Houses of Parliament with Cabinet Ministers, very much the same as you see a lawn strewn with leaves after an autumn gale. And yet these Ministers strewn about the two Houses are not amongst the leaders least trusted by the people, not amongst the least able, and not amongst the least experienced. My Lords, when we can remember that there are some eight or nine Ministers strewn about the two Houses who have been colleagues of the present Cabinet Ministers, it does seem to me that it is natural that the thought should arise in one's mind that if, as we say in Scotland, there has been a "purging of the roll," at least the Ministers who are left should have one mind and might be in a position to state clearly what their policy is

We have had no opportunity of hearing in the Houses of Parliament what the Prime Minister's opinion is. I am sorry for that, and still more sorry for the reason of it. But we do know that he declared in favour of the reversal of the fiscal system which has obtained during the past fifty year. It is said that the Prime Minister does not favour protection, but I should have thought that protection was very much involved in a proposal to reverse the fiscal system of the past fifty years. He takes the very period during which the free-trade system has been in force, for that system was introduced fifty years ago. It is, therefore, evidently the free-trade system that the Prime Minister proposes to reverse, and we are justified in believing that until he proves the contrary by producing another policy which does not contain the idea of protection. We have not had matters made much clearer by the proceedings during the long debate in the House of Commons. During that debate the President of the Board of Trade made a strong free-trade speech, something in the tenor of that the noble Marquis has just delivered. But he was shortly afterwards thrown over by his own Under-Secretary, who made a strong protectionist speech. We have seen Ministers standing on protectionist platforms in the country and actually attacking those who had been their own friends as to their free-trade opinions. One of those Ministers made a speech in the House of Commons, and from that I really could not make out what his own personal opinion was. Then we had the new Colonial Secretary, who proved himself an out and out protectionist. We then had a speech, the set-off, from the Irish Secretary, who declared the policy of the Government to be a great departure, not from the traditions of free trade, but from the routine of Budget-making. My Lords, what does he mean by a departure from the routine of Budget-making? That is a cryptic saying on which I shall be glad to receive some enlightenment. Then we finally had the Home Secretary declaring himself to be in favour of free trade. The Government has been asked its policy on the most important question which has been before the country for the past fifty years, and all I can say of its utterances is that it either cannot or will not reply. It is then left to us to conclude what their policy is in the best way we can from these varying utterances. If I may paraphrase a sentence of the main agitator, the main cause of this *casus teterrima belli*, I might say: "Colonial preferences are gone; taxes on food are gone; retaliation is threatened." And, my Lords, where is it more proper to raise the question of retaliation than in this House, where stands the champion of retaliation—the would-be owner of the big revolver. The noble Marquess is hardly suited to figure as a good Claude Duval. I do not think he would find the attire of a highwayman, ready to produce his pistol to some foreign country and call for their money or their lives—I do not think he would find that position a very comfortable one, or one that would fit his figure. I am tempted to give the noble Marquis my own personal first experience of a big revolver. Many years ago—more than thirty years ago—I went off on an expedition to America. I was going into a wild part of the country, and was given a beautiful and big new revolver by an affectionate relative of mine. I went first to stay with the Seventh Cavalry on the plain, and was then going to the wild part of the mountains in Colorado. I was very proud of this revolver, and showed it with great pride to one of my friends in the Seventh Cavalry, explaining how valuable it would be when I got into the wilds of the mountains. He looked at it and said—

> "Guess I should not take that with you,"

I asked why. He said—

> "It will be of no good to you. A revolver is only of good to a man who is prepared to shoot first, and you will not use it. The effect of showing it would be that the man would shoot you, because he would shoot at you first."

I left that revolver with my cavalry friend and went into the mountains and was very safe. If the noble Marquis will apply the moral of that anecdote to his ministerial duties he will find in the end it will be the safest and best course for him and the country too. But, my Lords, I do protest against these various warlike figures we are all so fond of using. I admit having used them myself, but I think they are entirely out of place when we are discussing a question of commerce. I would rather take the line followed only last year at the Iron and Steel Institute by the Prime Minister himself. He said—

> "The riches of one nation conduce, believe me, not to the poverty but to the wealth of another nation, and if we could double or treble, by the stroke of a fairy wand, the wealth of every other nation of the world but our own, depend upon it our nation would greatly benefit by the process."

I think that is a much better spirit to work in when dealing with other nations, rather than adopting the warlike similes and actions of retaliation. As a matter of fact retaliation does not reject nor does it even bar the way to full protection. On the contrary, I hold that retaliation is absolutely the path towards protection; that it is its very forerunner. Whether you call it protection, or colonial preference, or retaliation, they all mean the same thing—they all mean the restriction of our markets. Surely that is not what is to the advantage of this country; surely it is better for the British manufacturer to have as many customers as possible in every part of the world; surely it is better for him to be able to buy and sell in unrestricted markets all over the world; surely it is better for the consumer to do the same; and surely it is better for the producer, equally, to have as many markets as possible open to him. My Lords, to sum up, it is better to have a free market rather than a tied market.

My Lords, there is one other point. Retaliation, it seems to me, involves the taxation of food just as much as protection or colonial preference do. For retaliation to be effective it must be put in force against the principal exports of that particular country against which action is proposed to be taken. My noble friend has already given figures regarding Russia and America, but Mr. Wyndham, the other night, put the case very clearly. He said that hostile tariffs ranged from 25 per cent. in Germany to 75 per cent. in the United States and 131 per cent. in Russia. Surely if you are going to begin to retaliate against any nation, if you are to take this action against any nation at all, you will have to begin against those particular nations which have the greatest amount of duty imposed on your goods. These nations are Russia and the United States, and, as my noble friend has shown, the proportion of manufactured goods sent to us from Russia is practically *nil,* whilst the proportion sent from America is not 10 per cent. I think it seems only common sense to ask you to admit that if you are going to effectively use retaliation against Russia or the United States you must use it by imposing duties on raw materials or food sent to us by those two countries. But if that is attempted away goes your repudiation of the idea of putting a tax on your foodstuffs. And if you are going to tax your foodstuffs you are going to adopt a very serious and, I believe, a most injurious course. Taking the average of the last five years, it appears that you only take from your Empire about one-fifth of the whole of your wheat and flour—some 19,000,000 cwts. from your colonies and dependencies as against a total of 100,000,000 cwts. Though you get this amount from your colonies it is practically only from a single colony that you can really get a good supply. India and Australia and Canada send us foodstuffs. But you cannot rely on India and Australia, for in India a famine will cause the whole of the produce there to be used up, while in Australia they are subject to droughts. Therefore it is only from Canada that you can depend upon getting a regular supply. One-fifth of your food supply you get from your colonies. How long will it take for you to make up from your Empire the remaining four-fifths which have to be obtained and which it is necessary to ask for? If you leave the question of bread stuffs and come to meat the case is even stronger still. Although the importation of bread stuffs and wheat has about doubled in the last thirty years, the importation of meat has quadrupled, the figures being 14·6 lbs. per head in the year 1872, as against 56·6 lbs. per head in 1902. And of all this meat there is barely a one-sixth part that comes from your Empire. Considering that here in this country you get three-fourths of your bread stuffs from abroad and two-thirds of your general food supply from abroad, surely it is the same sense of self-preservation and self-interest that should secure that these products should be brought into the country as cheaply and from as many different parts of the world as possible.

My Lords, it is said that this policy of protection is going to increase employment; it is said to be going to relieve distress in this country. But do we find that employment is greater and that distress is less in the countries whom we are now invited to copy? Let us take Germany and France. Prove your case; show us that in Germany, that in France, employment is more regular; show that there is less distress. Can you do so? Show that the wages are higher. Take the very Blue-book you have laid on the Table of the House. There you will see proved to demonstration that wages in both France and Germany are lower, and considerably lower, than they are here. You will find it also proved as distinctly that the prices of all the necessaries of life to the workmen here in this country are lower than they are to the workmen in Germany and France. It is not only the fact that the British workman gets a higher wage; he not only gets more shillings every week but more shillings buy more goods than the shilling of the French or German workman. My Lords, the Blue-book further shows you that, during the last thirty years, the change in the price of commodities in this country has been no less than this, that that which cost £100 in the year 1871 can now be bought for £78 16s. Now about the question of regularity of employment. There you have, just as before, a cry of distress and want of employment in Berlin as you have in London, and even greater. I know that the figures for Germany cannot be exactly given, but all our Consuls and other authorities report that the amount of distress and non-employment in Germany is very large indeed, and they also report that the consequences of that distress is great agitation and great unrest amongst the poorer population of Germany. In the case of France, we are in a better position to judge, because there they have the same sort of returns from the various trades unions as we have in this country. Taking these returns you find that undoubtedly in France there is a want of employment which is double that shown by the Board of Trade trades unions returns in England, and you also see, if this be the case in these countries which have adopted protection as a permanent rule, as their rule, that it will be a great deal worse here if we adopt the intermittent form of protection which you will adopt if you adopt retaliatory measures under such conditions as you propose. I understand your proposal is this. You are only to use retaliatory powers not for permanent, not for protective purposes, but only in order to induce foreign countries to lower their duties on the goods you send to them. What will be the effect of that operation? Suppose you put a duty on a particular manufactured article that comes from Germany into this country—a heavy duty—in order to obtain certain advantages from Germany. The result of that is that you encourage in this country the manufacture of that particular article on which you have to pay a duty in Germany, and from that date you raise the price of the imported article from Germany. The result would be that the trade in that particular article in this country would be encouraged; that men would be called in to that particular sort of manufacture; that capital would be put into it and factories would be built for it. Let us suppose that at the end of five or six years your retaliatory duty is successful and that Germany takes off the duty against which you aimed the retaliatory step. I suppose that then you would take off the retaliatory duty. The result will be that you will destroy the very manufacture you have built up in this artificial manner in this country. The capitalists will lose their money, and the workmen, and all trade adjuncts, will be thrown out of work, but they will no longer be able to compete with the German article, which will again come in without duty. I say the evils of intermittent protection are more likely to prove worse than the evils of regular protection which can be counted upon to go on as part of the general commercial system of the country.

My Lords, after all, this policy of retaliation is not a new one. It is nothing that we did not know all about. It has been customary in this country in the past; it is customary in different countries all over the world. And what has been the result of the experience that we have had of retaliation? My contention is that, in the case of all Continental nations, they have never procured the privileges of retaliation without impoverishing the people of their own country. It may be said—Is there a method by which you can adopt the policy of retaliation without having the evils which have attached to it in the past, and which attach to it still in other countries? If so, let it be offered to us, let it be explained by His Majesty's Government how they propose to mitigate the evils or avoid the evils which have been bound to result from retaliation when applied in so many foreign countries. There are two or three questions I should like to put to His Majesty's Government. I should like to know for how long you intend to impose these retaliatory measures. You deny that you intend to put them on as permanent protective duties. Surely there must be some term to which you will limit the duty. Will it be five years or ten years or fifteen years or twenty years? How long do you propose to leave on these duties, supposing a foreign country does not fall in with your way of thinking? For if you are proposing to leave them on continuously you are simply proposing a protective measure. What are you going to do in this matter with regard to your own colonies? It seems difficult to find any foreign country more determined than our own colonies to exclude British manufactured goods in favour of goods they can possibly manufacture for themselves. We have heard a great deal about this from the Colonies, but we have never yet heard of any offer having been made by them which would show that they were willing to take the duties off British goods in order to allow them into the Colonies, at the risk of injuring colonial manufacturers. Unless you can clear up some of these difficulties, unless you can show that the difficulties which are pointed out can be avoided, you cannot expect to get the free hand to deal with retaliation, which you are asking for. I think it would be difficult to find any set of statesmen who will be trusted by the nation with a blank cheque in this respect, unless they are prepared to come boldly into the open and state fully and explicitly the details of the policy which the country is asked to adopt.

*LORD HYLTON: My Lords, I should be very loth on any occasion to take up the time of the House, and especially at this hour, therefore I will only delay your Lordships a very few moments. But if ever an occasion justified it, I think it is the present crisis. There has been proposed, not by His Majesty's Government, but by a powerful party in the country, a complete reversal of the fiscal policy which has obtained in this country for the last two generations. New organisations, my Lords, have sprung up all over the country both in favour of this new policy and against this new policy. A Cabinet has broken up on this subject and His Majesty's present advisers do not hold altogether identical opinions upon it. Therefore, my Lords, I think that private Members are entitled to say a few words and to justify their votes by some expression of their opinion. I am not going back to the controversies of 1846 nor will I attempt to speak on the arguments for or against protection or free trade that were brought forward at that time, if for this reason alone that the predictions of that day have been completely falsified on both sides. Some of the free-trade party at that time predicted that, once we had free trade in this country, every other nation would follow in our suit. They were wrong. The Tories at that day predicted that if free trade was adopted universal ruin would befall the country, and they too were wrong. And no one at that time, my Lords, foresaw the great changes that would be caused by the gold discoveries which took place shortly after the introduction of free trade. The fact is that the general improvement in the condition of the people of this country since 1846 has been too marked, and the general increase in the prosperity of these kingdoms has been too evident to require any dwelling on. One exception to that general prosperity there does unfortunately exist; the profits of agriculture have unfortunately diminished since that date, and many of your Lordships, I might say all of you, regret that circumstance very much. But I cannot admit that that circumstance detracts from the truth of my statement that the general prosperity of this country has been widely increased since the year 1846, and that, if not entirely, it is mainly due to the adoption of the principle of free imports introduced by Sir Robert Peel, extended by Mr. Gladstone, and supported by every Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by every Government, Conservative or Liberal, since that date. I believe further, my Lords, that the internal tranquillity of these kingdoms during the long reign of our late revered Queen was largely due to the amelioration of the condition of the people, for when the people, the bulk of the working classes, find that their condition is being ameliorated in every possible way, they are not anxious to seek great political changes. Therefore I think I may claim further that the maintenance of the Constitution of the kingdom since 1846, in practically its ancient integrity, has been largely due to the benefits derived from free trade.

Believing the truth of these statements, yet I, in common with all my fellow-countrymen, have watched with the greatest interest the campaign that has been started in the country by Mr. Chamberlain and by his supporters. He urges protection on the country on four great grounds as I understand. In the first place Mr. Chamberlain claims that certain interests and certain industries have been entirely ruined. In the second place he claims that what is called the balance of trade is against this country. In the third place he has pointed out the evils of dumping; and in the fourth place he has urged the great necessity for this country of keeping our colonial markets. My Lords, I will endeavour to deal with each of these four points. As regards the ruin of certain industries which has undoubtedly taken place, I am sure your Lordships, every-one of you, will sympathise very deeply with the ruin of any industry. Nothing can be a more melancholy sight, in my opinion, than to see deserted workshops, rusting machinery, roofless cottages, and a general air of desolation where at one time a whole population has lived and flourished. But, my Lords, I think that in every age and in every country certain industries have decayed and perished. In one instance it may be the forces of nature that have caused the ruin of an industry, in another case it may be the caprices of fashion. I do not know whether any of your Lordships are acquainted with the region of the Mendip Hills. There for hundreds of years thousands of men enjoyed prosperity through working in the lead mines. That region is now still and deserted. Look at Sussex, where, in former days, the chief iron industry of the country was established. Look at Norfolk, where, in the middle ages, a great population obtained a livelihood by means of the wool trade. I remember, my Lords, a striking passage in a speech of the late Lord Salisbury in which he alluded to decaying nations. And as there are decaying nations so there are decaying industries and ever have been. In the days of protection certain industries decayed and perished When guns came in armour went out. The railways of course, my Lords, killed stage coaches, and one of the great arguments used in Parliament against the legislative sanction of Parliament being given to railways was that it would undoubtedly bring ruin upon whole classes of the community connected with stage coaches, country inns, the breeding of horses, and so on. I cannot admit that the extinction of single industries can be considered a valid argument for abolishing the whole system of free imports. I then come to the argument advanced as to the balance of trade being against us. It is, I understand, argued that the imports into this country largely exceed the exports; that thereby a great deal of the trade of this country must inevitably be in a suffering state. In the eighteenth century this theory was advanced of the balance of trade and that if imports were larger than exports it was bad for a country. That theory was advanced in the eighteenth century, but I believe that ever since that time political economists of all shades of opinion have come to the conclusion that it was entirely a fallacious theory. It struck me with some surprise that this antiquated theory should have been exhumed by the advocates of protection in the present campaign.

My Lords, coming to the question of dumping, of course if raw materials for any industry can be dumped into this country so much the better for the manufacturers. As to the dumping of finished articles, if that did threaten ruin to any of our industries I should gladly see the adoption by any Government of measures of exceptional legislation against it. Then as to the question of keeping our colonial markets. Everyone must value to the highest degree the trade with our colonies, but the noble Lord, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, put so clearly the difficulties that would attend any system of giving preference to colonial imports, that I need not dwell upon them. I think from these four arguments of the protectionists that their contentions are inadequate. But even granting that they were adequate what would be the effect of the tariffs that are proposed by the protectionists? The effect on the general body of consumers of a general tariff would, of course, be, as I think would be admitted by noble Lords on both sides of this House, to increase the price of every article and injure the general body of consumers. What would be the effect of a tariff on the producers of this country? Any benefit that the producers might gain in one pocket they would lose in the other, for it must not be forgotten that every producer is at the same time a consumer. As regards the effect of tariffs on revenue, I cannot see that any great benefit is to be anticipated, for an integral portion of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme is to reduce the duties on tea and sugar, and the revenue would thereby lose what it might gain from the import duties. My Lords, I come to another point. It was urged that if these tariffs could be brought into effect that wages would rise in the country. Where, I ask, is the increased wage fund to come from?

If, my Lords, I cannot for a moment range myself on the side of Mr. Chamberlain and his proposals, I see no reason whatever for not giving my vote on behalf of His Majesty's Government. The Government, as I understand, propose no tax on foodstuffs, and no colonial preference, and I think it has been stated in another place, no general 10 per cent. import duty on manufactured articles. Whilst, therefore, in the main, I am a supporter of free-trade principles, yet I see no reason why I should not, when His Majesty's Government have brought forward in detail their measures of retaliation, give my hearty and cordial support to such measures. The noble Lord opposite who last spoke, warned the noble Marquess of the dangerous effects of using revolvers in a careless manner, but I think that the foreign revolver has been let off at us so continually already that we are fully justified in making reprisals, as we were not the first people to shoot. We have been peppered over and over again by the foreign revolvers. I admit that there are, of course, great difficulties in the way of retaliation. Noble Lords opposite have stated that, and, I think, the noble Marquess has admitted it. The cases of Russia and the United States have been quoted. They are the two countries whose tariffs are the highest against us, and they send to us almost entirely food stuffs. It would be very difficult, I think, to see how we are to retaliate against them. I have seen British ship after British ship passing up the Bosphorus towards Odessa with their hulls high out of the water, with no cargo because it was very difficult for us to export anything into Russia on account of the enormous tariff against us. They came back laden heavily with foodstuffs and raw materials for England. There is a great deal of difficulty in applying retaliation to those tariffs and also those of the United States. The noble Lords opposite made it a great reproach against the Government that they had not fully disclosed what their intentions are, and that a division of opinion seems to exist among Ministers. I believe that the Government are fully entitled not to be called upon to disclose their plans at present. And that on historical grounds, my Lords. From the beginning of the last century down to 1829, Catholic emancipation was allowed to remain an open question in every Cabinet. In the thirties and the forties the reform of the Corn Laws remained an open question very largely. Lord Melbourne, for instance, was strongly opposed to the repeal of the Corn Laws, and many of his colleagues were in favour of it. In Lord Palmerston's last Government he was absolutely opposed to, and refused to entertain, any idea of Parliamentary reform, when his first lieutenant, Mr. Gladstone, and others were strongly in favour of it. I do not think, my Lords, that it can be fairly brought against the Government that it is an absolutely new and unprecedented situation that on one subject the details of their scheme should not yet be brought before Parliament. This question, I understand, is to be treated as the noble Marquess said, as a vote of confidence in the Government, and I shall most cordially and cheerfully go into the lobby in support of the Government.

LORD BYRON: My Lords, like the noble Lord who has just sat down, I propose to trouble your Lordships for a few moments only. I should not have done so but for a remark which fell from the noble Lord the Marquess of Salisbury. It is a remark, my Lords, that has been widely circulated for some time, and one which, no doubt, he has taken up with the rest. He says that this question of reciprocity is likely to be the only one before the country at the next general election. May I ask the noble Marquess how he knows that?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: If the noble Lord will allow me, what I said was that retaliation was the policy which His Majesty's Government would submit to the electors at the next general election.

LORD BYRON: How does the noble Marquess know that it will be the only question before the country?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I do not think that I said that.

LORD BYRON: Just so; let us assume that the Liberal Party bring forward a question. Let us suppose it is the question of Parliamentary reform. Where would the retaliation policy be then? I do not think it would be heard of at all. But then with regard to the Government; we were told only the other day that as Bright and Cobden took as long as they chose about the repeal of the Corn Laws, so the Government to-day should be allowed to take just as long time as they chose to bring forward the details of their policy. I saw that stated only the other day in a speech in the House of Commons. Suppose, my Lords, on this question of reciprocity, that we take the statement of one of their own professors. Professor Ashley says the question will be discussed for a whole generation. Are we to wait a whole generation while the question of reciprocity is agitated. As the House is now rapidly emptying, and I understand that the noble Lord below me (Lord Ribblesdale) desires to move the adjournment, I do not propose to detain the House any longer. It only occurred to me that this question was one which might be well considered by His Majesty's Government.

LORD RIBBLESDALE: On behalf of my noble friend Lord Brassey, I beg to move that the House do adjourn till nine o'clock.

On Question Motion agreed to, and Sitting suspended till Nine o'clock.

***LORD BRASSEY**: The fiscal controversy embraces a wide field and may be approached from many points of view. Its colonial aspects are necessarily of the deepest interest to those who have served in responsible positions in the Colonies. I do not propose to offer any observations on that part of the subject. They will come more fittingly on the Motion of my hon. friend and former colleague in Australia, Lord Beauchamp. In the present debate we deal with retaliation. Why is retaliation, or perhaps, to speak more correctly, protection, pressed at this time, an urgent and vital necessity? It is said that, in the race of progress, we have failed to keep pace with our industrial rivals, and that at some not far distant time we shall be left behind in the race. During the last quarter of a century the condition of British trade and the progress of foreign countries has been closely watched by the Board of Trade. Every five years we have had their impartial and authoritative reports, and in each of those reports testimony is borne to our commanding position. In the last report, presented two sessions ago, as in the first, we are assured that we still preponderate greatly as a country manufacturing for export. In considering the relative progress of British and foreign trade we have to consider the state and condition of industries at the dawn of free trade. Perhaps I may venture in this connection to refer to my traditions and my early recollections. They carry me back to the commencement of railway enterprise in France. At that time our nearest neighbour was far behind us in nearly every branch of industry. The first railways and the first locomotives constructed in France were constructed by English workmen. Such a state of things could not continue. We all recognise the industrial ability of France. If for a time the progress in France exceeded our own, it would not justify those pessimistic views regarding ourselves. The rise of industries n Germany came later, as the result of German unity, assisted by the payment of the large war indemnities. When Germany woke up the progress made was by leaps and bounds. The start was made with every advantage, with a full knowledge of our inventions and our methods, and with all the experience of long established industries elsewhere. Of late Germany has not done more than hold her own with the United Kingdom. Perhaps I may be allowed to refer to the figures in the Blue-book. The exports of manufactures for the last five years are given in the Blue-book: 1896, £115,000,000; 1901, £144,600,000. To Germany and the United Kingdom the increase is precisely the same, namely, £29,600,000, but, as we have reason to believe, with widely different financial results. The trade of the United Kingdom was on a sound commercial basis. In Germany, as we know, a severe crisis has recently been experienced, which is now happily passing away.

How and where has the progress, the satisfactory progress, of British commerce been maintained? It is true that we have lost ground in the protected countries. In the unprotected countries, chiefly within or near the tropics, our gains have more than made good what we have lost in the protected countries. We have gained our commanding position by the cheapness and quality of our goods. If we reverse our fiscal policy we shall lose all the advantages we have hitherto enjoyed under free trade in this country. Our vast trade with tropical countries is a prime factor in adjusting the balance of our indebtedness in the direct trade with the protective countries. The excess of our imports from France and from the United States represent payments for freights, payments on dividends for British investments, and to a large extent payments for tropical produce supplied to foreign countries by British merchants. Free trade does not deprive us of the power of retaliation. It is more true to say that it places a more powerful weapon in our hands, if it is to our advantage to use it. In the present state of our trade relations, we should be a loser in a war of tariffs.

Viewing retaliation as an instrument of negotiation, there is one observation which I should like to make. By hostile tariffs we may exclude goods from our markets, but this is certain, that our part in the supply of manufactured goods to meet the home demand of such countries as Germany can never be large. It is vital for the industrial people of such countries to manufacture for themselves. The increase of their urban population is even greater than ours, and that urban population depends upon the activity of trade and manufactures. The home market is, as I have said, of vital importance, and, as yet, neither Germany nor any other of our competitors has found an outlet such as we have in India, in foreign countries, and in our British possessions for the sale of their surplus manufactures. In applying a policy of retaliation we must take care that we do not injure ourselves. The opinion of the trader must certainly be taken with considerable reserve. Nor is the judgment of politicians, described by Adam Smith as insidious and wily animals, altogether infallible. The approval of a Parliament in which every interest is represented, should be obtained. It is our only safeguard. I confidently support the Motion which my noble friend has moved.

***LORD AVEBURY**: I was delighted to hear the noble Marquess earlier in the evening, in a speech upon the ability of which I should be glad if I may congratulate him. I was glad to hear him speak so cordially and so heartily in support of free trade. He also pointed out very clearly the great injury which was being done to the trade and commerce of the country by being left in a state of uncertainty. But that, my Lords, is exactly the position in which we now find ourselves. If, in reality, the fiscal policy which has been followed for so many years in this country is going to be entirely reversed, it cannot, I think, be questioned for a moment that many industries which are now highly remunerative and prosperous will find themselves hampered, if not entirely ruined. I do sincerely trust, therefore, that as soon as possible His Majesty's Government will tell us exactly what it is they propose to do and the changes they desire to make. It is not too much to say that the fiscal problem brought forward by His Majesty's Government is one of vital importance to the country. It is most important, therefore, that we should know the decision of the Government and the country. The present state of uncertainty is very injurious to our manufacturing interests. They have no doubt told us that it is no part of their policy to put duties upon either food or raw materials. But what does the Government include under raw materials? The Board of Trade returns place semi-manufactured and manufactured articles under one head, which includes, for instance, sawn timber and pig-iron. I do not know that they could do otherwise, but semi-manufactured articles are really the raw materials—to use Cobden's expression "the daily bread" of other manufactures. The principal complaint appears to be that some things are, as it is said, "dumped" on us. But this is certainly not an unmixed evil. We buy these goods because we want them. For instance, the Board of Trade memorandum quotes Ryland's Circular as regards the iron trade. The circular says—

> "We require all the steel and pig-iron they, *i.e.*, the Germans, are sending us, as it is impossible to get from our own blast furnaces and steel works sufficient ingots, blooms, or forge pig-iron to keep our works going."

To get these semi-manufactured articles cheap is a great advantage in many ways. It has immensely assisted our shipbuilders, and in 1901 we built over 980,000 tons of shipping, against 102,000 in Germany, 106,000 in France, and 469,000 in the United States. We are able, moreover, to construct houses, factories, warehouses, and railways, more cheaply than would otherwise be the case. The report of the Cologne Chamber of Commerce observes that Germans are really themselves the sufferers from this "dumping." The result they point out is—

> "That by supplying manufacturers abroad, *i.e.*, Germany, with materials at low prices, the German syndicates make it possible for these foreigners to compete on favourable terms with their rivals in Germany in regard to the sale of finished products."

Our able Consul at Frankfurt has recently told us that—

> "Under cover of the protectionist duties, the syndicates were enabled to keep up prices at home in spite of the limited demand. The difference of prices, however, fixed by the same works for sale at home and sales abroad became so great that it produced very strong comments, even in the Diet . . . They sold raw material and half finished goods abroad at low prices, so that the home industries, which worked off such raw materials were severely handicapped. These asserted, and not without reason, that the consumers of German materials in foreign countries, especially in Holland and Belgium, were, by these prices, placed in such an advantageous position that it was most difficult, if at all possible, to compete against their prices. Some cases actually transpired in which German finishing manufacturers had to decline orders owing to the exorbitant prices of raw materials, which orders subsequently passed to Holland, Belgium, and the United Kingdom."

Processes are so much divided that many manufacturers buy semi-manufactured materials and turn them into manufactured articles. To them in their business these are really raw materials. Take the shipbuilders. We build, as I have just mentioned, more ships than all the rest of the world put together, and one great reason is that our shipbuilders get the semi-manufactured articles which are the raw materials of their business more cheaply than their rivals in protectionist countries. If you tax these semi-manufactured articles you strike a blow at their trade. But the same argument really applies to manufactured articles. In a sense they also are raw materials. Steam engines, for instance, to a cotton spinner, to a railway company, to a coal mine, to an electric lighting company, in fact to most manufacturers, are one of the most necessary adjuncts of their business. If you tax a manufacturer £1,000 it matters little whether you put it on the steam engine he uses or the raw material he employs. The argument against taxing raw material applies to machinery, and indeed to manufactures generally.

The Prime Minister tells us that he wishes to impose duties in order to assist in foreign negotiations. But this would impose additional uncertainties and complexities on our manufacturers. Suppose, for instance, that in consequence of any action by Germany, we, in retaliation, put a heavy duty on toys, and induced capitalists to manufacture them here. Our capital and labour is all employed, so that the first effect would be to divert a certain portion of each from more remunerative employment. Suppose, then, that Germany gave way. The grounds on which we took action being removed, I presume the duties would be taken off, but the manufacturers who had been induced by the duties to set up works and machinery, would be heavy losers, and would certainly consider that they had reason to complain.

Moreover, we have already tried this system without effect. Mr. Gladstone has recorded that when he was at the Board of Trade—

> "From 1841 to 1844 we were anxiously and eagerly endeavouring to make tariff treaties with many foreign countries. Austria, I think, may have been included, but I especially recollect France, Prussia, Portugal, and, I believe, Spain. And the state of our tariff, even after the law of 1824, was then such as to supply us with plenty of material for liberal offers. Notwithstanding this, we failed in every case. I doubt whether we advanced the cause of free trade a single inch."

Mr. Gladstone's opinion on matters of commerce is, of course, most important. This, moreover, is not a matter of opinion, but a statement of fact. Lastly, it must be remembered, that protectionist countries are even now trying this system. It is certainly not a success, but if France or Germany secured any advantage, we should, under the favoured-nation clause, share it with them.

Mr. Chamberlain is under the impression that countries which have adopted protection have prospered "in an infinitely better proportion." Let us then compare our exports and population with those of protectionist countries. France has about the same population, but her exports are about £120,000,000 less than ours. Germany, of which we hear so much, though it has 16,000,000 more people, exports £58,000,000 less than we do. The Germans are an intelligent, capable, and hard-working people. We might well be satisfied if, man for man, our exports were equal to theirs, but as a fact, while our population is much smaller, our exports are much greater; and yet we are invited to abandon our own system and adopt theirs. In fact, per head, our exports are the largest in the world. Those of the United States are £2 18s. per head; of Germany, £3 7s.; of France, £3 15s.; ours, £5 19s.

Look again at our trade with protectionist countries as against theirs with one another. In 1901 we sent £24,000,000 into France, as against £15,000,000 from the protectionist country, Germany; and £18,000,000 from the United States. Into the protectionist market of the United States of America we sent £28,000,000 as against £20,000,000 from Germany and £15,000,000 from France. Lastly into Germany nearly twice as much as France. Protection, therefore, has not given France, Germany, or the United States any advantage in each other's markets as against us.

But has our trade been prosperous? In their impartial and authoritative Report the Commissioners of Inland Revenue say—

> "The growth of income in recent years has been so remarkable that we venture to offer a few observations on the subject."

They show that since 1870, that is to say, in thirty-five years, our income returned for income-tax has increased from £398,000,000 to £867,000,000, a gigantic increase of £468,000,000! In the last six years it has increased £90,000,000.

I do not deny that there are some cases in which we have just reason to complain, and which would fully justify retaliation. The Resolution asks what steps the Government propose to take to give effect to their policy of retaliation. I should like also to inquire what steps they have taken to redress the grievances of which they complain? What representations have been made to foreign countries. And what replies have been given? Will any Papers be laid on the Table? Take, for instance, shipping. We allow United States vessels to take goods from any of our ports to another. They refuse us the same freedom. This is manifestly unjust and unfair, and we should be interested to know what representations have been made, whether a suggestion so fair and reasonable has been refused, and if so, on what grounds. From information given me I am disposed to believe that our merchants on the Congo have great reason to complain, but negotiations are pending, and I fully trust that justice will be done. But the most flagrant case, perhaps, is that of some of the Central American States. They have shamefully swindled English investors? They are large exporters of coffee, but other coffee is just as good, and a duty on coffee coming from those dishonest countries might be well worth considering and would be fully justified. There are therefore, I fully believe, cases which would justify retaliation, but we should be interested to hear under what conditions, and in what manner, it is to be applied. I trust it will only be, firstly, after every effort has been made by friendly representations and negotiations; secondly, if there is reasonable ground for expecting that it will be effective; thirdly, if it will not do more harm than good to British Commerce; and finally, that it should be, as suggested in the Resolution, subject to the assent of Parliament. But these are exceptional cases. They are no sufficient reasons to reverse our fiscal policy.

The protective policy of other countries no doubt unfavourably affects us, but it is a much greater injury to themselves. If they to some extent close their markets to us, they shut themselves out of other markets. If to some extent they are less good customers, they are far less formidable rivals. This fiscal agitation is greatly to be regretted, not only because it unsettles our commerce and manufactures, but also because it tends to deter foreign countries from lowering their duties. Abroad they naturally conclude that we are going to abandon free trade and this encourages protectionists all over the world. It surely is evident that the progress made by the United States and our colonies has not been owing to protection, but in spite of protection. If they had not forced the industry of their countries into artificial channels, they would have been richer and more prosperous than they are. The farmers in America and Australia are paying to bolster up other industries. Under free trade our manufactures and commerce have grown, are growing, and, I believe, will grow. As a humble supporter of His Majesty's Government I would express an earnest hope that they will not commit themselves to a commercial war with other countries, that they will not ask us to reverse the fiscal policy on which the prosperity of the country and the welfare of our people so greatly depend, or to adopt a course which would inevitably and gravely injure those industrial and commercial interests which both they and we desire to strengthen, to promote, and encourage.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): The noble Lord who has just sat down must always, of course, be listened to with very great interest in your Lordships' House on any commercial subject which may come before us. Your Lordships will have noticed in the speech he has just delivered, and to which I listened very carefully, that practically the whole of his speech was an attack against the policy of introducing protection into this country. I know that your Lordships are always very generous to any speaker who addresses this House, and who does not stick very closely to the point. I would remind your Lordships, however, that this evening we are discussing the policy that His Majesty's Government have announced, and which they are prepared to place before the country at the next general election. Now it has been most strongly and clearly stated that protection has nothing whatever to do with that policy. Noble Lords opposite have refused to recognise that fact, and no doubt they will continue to refuse to recognise it. The noble Lord opposite, Lord Crewe, suggested that our difference upon protection was merely one of a technical nature. Lord Tweedmouth maintains that protection is in Mr. Balfour's mind, and we have had a still more general comment on this point from the noble Earl on the Cross Benches in a speech he delivered at Edinburgh, when he said that retaliation covers a multitude of things. The policy of His Majesty's Government is most distinctly laid down in a pamphlet which has been written by the Prime Minister, and which is published at a price well within the reach of all your Lordships. On page 11 of that pamphlet it is most distinctly stated—

> "I approach this question as a free-trader—that is, with a desire to promote free-trade as far as contemporary circumstances permit."

That clearly recognises that we approach this subject as free-traders, and I do not know what clearer words could be found in the English language to explain our position. In discussing the fiscal question it is possible to discuss it from many standpoints. One can approach it as a protectionist or as an advocate of preference. We have not heard the subject approached from that position yet in the course of this debate, but there is another standpoint from which it is possible to approach it, and we have heard a great deal from that standpoint; it is the standpoint which is perfectly contented with the present state of things, or at any rate is not prepared to come forward with any remedy. Noble Lords opposite have, it is true, suggested one remedy, namely, the remedy of education. I need not remind your Lordships that two years ago an Education Bill was introduced into your Lordships' House. It was a Bill which in the main was designed to vastly improve the educational system of this country, and experience has shown that in many parts of the country where that Bill is now working without the interference of political agitators, the educational system of this country has been improved. I do not remember any very great anxiety and keenness on the part of noble Lords opposite to accept that Bill when it was introduced two years ago, but, be that as it may, I fail utterly to understand, and I shall be glad to be convinced, how education, even the highest technical education, is to help the British workmen to get his goods into a country that has tariff walls 100 per cent. higher than our own. I call that remedy, with great respect, a very feeble one. I cannot believe that it will help us very much in the near or the distant future. Noble Lords see foreign nations putting up their tariffs and they make no protest whatever. In fact it seems to me that they almost rather rejoice in it, because one of the indirect results is that we get a certain amount of goods back from that country a great deal cheaper. That is not the sort of free-trader that I ever hope to show myself in addressing your Lordships. There is another sort of free-trader, a sort that I maintain we, the members of the Government, are, and it is the sort of free-trader that the great reformers of sixty years ago were. They looked round and saw that Europe had been devastated with a great war. They saw opportunities for commerce and industrial expansion which since then have been fully realised, and they set before themselves a great ideal which was embodied in the word free trade, but what was that free trade? I was permitted a few weeks ago to look into an old autograph book, and I came across the following entry under the date of the 5th of December, 1845—

> "Ours the triumph be
> Round social earth to circle fair exchange,
> And bind the nations in a golden chain."

Beneath those words were the signatures of Richard Cobden and John Bright. Their idea was "to circle fair exchange" throughout the world, but that is not the sort of free trade we have got now. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright were undoubtedly men of great ideals. Certainly Mr. Cobden's ideas on the Colonies were not such as we generally find amongst statesmen at this moment, and Mr. Bright held opinions as to the possession of India which might at the present moment have driven him into the wigwam of Little England. They were men who did a great deal to carry out great ideals, although they were extremely bad prophets. The noble Lord opposite said he thought they were rather good prophets, but there is a prophecy made by Mr. Cobden—it is rather old, and I do not want to bore the House with it—he did prophecy that after ten years the whole world would be free-traders according to his ideal, which was fair exchange. We have had a very remarkable admission from the noble Earl who spoke first this afternoon. We have actually had an admission—no, I am wrong, and I beg his pardon, it was an admission by the whole of the Opposition in answer to a Question put by the noble Marquess behind me—that British trade is not absolutely at its zenith at the present moment. The noble Marquess asked—Is there anyone who will maintain that contention, and he received no answer. It has certainly been part of the campaign which has been directed against all fiscal reform, that nothing has been so perfect as British trade at the present moment. A most distinguished politician prescribed for our present condition "commercial repose," and when the Board of Trade returns came out it was found that the returns of exports and imports were greater than anything we had had before, and this was received with a chorus of admiration by a few papers which support noble Lords opposite, and they adduced this as a convincing proof that no change of any sort was necessary. I am not one who maintains that British trade is on its last legs, and I believe myself that there is a great deal of life in the old dog yet. But there are disquieting things, and I think we should be lacking in our duty if we did not make some attempt to grapple with them. Mention has been made of the total volume of our trade. The noble Lord opposite also quoted it during various years, and maintained and thought he proved from that that the state of our trade was satisfactory at the present moment. Well, my Lords, I do not think that it is a proper comparison to compare our present trade with our past. The proper comparison, I submit, is to compare our present trade with the present trade of our rivals abroad. If your Lordships will give me your patience for a few moments I should like to do that. My noble friend Lord Brassey appealed to the Board of Trade Returns, and for that reason I may be allowed to refer to a Board of Trade Blue-book presented in 1902 by Sir Alfred Bateman. In the last paragraph of his Memorandum upon the trade of the United Kingdom he says—

> "The increase of population in Germany and the United States has recently been greater than the increase in the United Kingdom, and these countries have rapidly developed

manufacturing and industrial power. As with ourselves, so with these countries, the set of population has been to the towns; necessarily therefore there has been a more vigorous search than formerly for an outlet for the power above referred to. We are still ahead of either country in our power of manufacture for export, but, beginning from a lower level, each country is travelling upwards more rapidly than we are, who occupy a higher eminence. If peace is maintained both Germany and the United States are certain to increase their rate of upward movement, their competition with us in neutral markets, and even in our home markets, will probably, unless we ourselves are active, become increasingly serious."

That is not the position we ought to contemplate with perfect equanimity or treat by prescribing repose. We are losing our former share of the trade of the world, and I am still of opinion that in the future the British share should be a lion's share, and I think it is our duty to try and keep it that size.

I would like to turn your attention for a moment to one or two other points which I submit are disquieting causes. First, as regards our imports. I was taught at Oxford, when I first waddled down the paths of political economy, that imports always paid for exports and *vice versa*. Possibly that is so, at least I dare not have written anything else in my papers on political economy. The amounts never tally, and some of the discrepancies are explained, firstly by freights and insurance; and, secondly, by the addition of interest on the amount of our capital invested abroad. I have not been able to find any evidence that freights have very greatly increased of late years, but there is no question that the discrepancy between our imports and exports has greatly increased, and we are continually importing more than we are exporting to pay for them. I may be wrong in my deduction, but my natural deduction from this must be that our foreign investments must be on the increase. Now is that a satisfactory state of affairs, and does it not rather point to a blot on our industrial system that British capital finds more attraction abroad than at home. This is proved from the fact that British capital is going abroad in increasing quantities every year. Now I turn to another point, namely, to the tariff walls. I do not wish to weary your Lordships with the subject, because I suppose noble Lords opposite will admit that these high tariff walls do us a great deal of harm. There is one point however mentioned by Lord Tweedmouth to which I should like to refer. He mentioned at the end of his speech that the Colonies are more keen to keep our goods out of their markets than anybody else, and he asked what was the Government going to do with the Colonies? Were they going to retaliate against the Colonies? Members of the Radical Party always seem very keen to embroil us with the Colonies, and I have never known the reason for this. The noble Lord has shown that he has read his Blue-book with very great care; but I have found one page which he has evidently not read. This page gives the estimated average or *ad valorem* equivalent of the import duties levied by certain countries and colonies on the principal articles of export from the United Kingdom—and the figures given *ad valorem* are, Russia, 131 per cent.; United States, 73 per cent.; France, 34 per cent.; Germany, 25 per cent.; Austro-Hungary, 35 per cent.; Belgium, 13 per cent.; New Zealand 9 per cent.; and Australia and the South African Customs Union 6 per cent. I confess that in the face of these figures I do not think there need be any great hurry on our part to consider retaliatory duties against our colonies in order to force ourselves into their markets.

I do not wish to detain your Lordships at great length, but I think there are a great many other subjects which give us room for dissatisfaction. Lord Goschen, who I regret is unable to be with us owing to the prevailing epidemic, quoted certain figures in your Lordships' House last year to show the prosperity of the country, and in doing so, with regard to some of them, I notice he pursued the usual anti-Government method of comparing the present with the past instead of comparing the present state of affairs in this country with that of foreign countries. He quoted saving banks returns. They had gone up, but now they are only £4 a head of the population. In Germany they are £7 per head, and in many other countries they are higher than in this. I am informed that where our income tax returns have increased 10 per cent. the Russian income tax returns have increased 45 per cent.

Our population is increasing slower than that of any other great country except France. The number of small bankruptcies in this country have increased to nearly double what they were forty years ago. My Lords, all these are disquieting things, and call upon us to wake up from the sort of commercial repose that is prescribed for us.

Now, my Lords, I want to refer to another small matter. The noble Lord opposite spoke of our commercial treaties, and I have heard our commercial treaties spoken of as the sheet anchor of the present fiscal system. I should not call them a sheet anchor, I would rather prefer to call them a volcano. Our present policy, which is declared to the world, is that the Government does not interfere in trade beyond making these most-favoured-nation clauses. Well, my Lords, I would remind your Lordships that the United States Treaty of 1815, the Russian Treaty of 1859, the Austrian Treaty of 1886, and the Italian Treaty of 1883 are all liable to be denounced at twelve months notice, and that if any of these or all of them are denounced at twelve months notice you have absolutely no weapon, if you discard retaliation, by which you can persuade those countries to give you any better terms than those they chose to throw at your heads. My Lords, we have been asked for different examples of the way in which we shall carry out this policy. Of course we cannot lay down any hard and fast rules. Every individual case must depend upon the individual distinctions of that case, and upon nothing else. Now, my Lords, before I sit down I wish to say a few words upon this subject that form a totally different point of view, and a point of view which I think has not yet been mentioned. I mean the Irish point of view of this question. Ireland has never up to this moment received very much consideration from the fiscal point of view. Originally, a century ago, our growing industries were practically swamped by the policy of the British Government of that time, and the only industry that was left to us, agriculture, was ruined by the free-trade policy of this country. Now, my Lords, I am not arguing this subject from the Irish point of view that you should bring back protection. But I do urge that this is the first occasion upon which Ireland has had a chance of being fiscally considered, if I may use the phrase, at one and the same time with, and as part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Noble Lords opposite have remedies for us in the way of education, but I cannot help remembering also that noble Lords opposite have a policy which must result in the end in cutting us off from any benefit that may accrue to us from any improvement in the English fiscal system. I do not wish to trouble your Lordships' House further. I hope your Lordships will reject the Motion of Lord Crewe and support the Cabinet, which has shown itself ready to help our people in the struggle for national life to which they are all naturally committed.

*LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, the noble Lord who has just sat down made a sort of complaint against the noble Lord who preceded him for not adhering to the point which is the point of discussion to-night. The noble Lord in his own speech has shown that the old proverb, "Imitation is the sincerest flattery," is only too true. We were treated to a homily on the dreams of Cobden and the views on India of Mr. Bright; to the conditions of Ireland; and then to the usual jeremiad on free trade; as to how we were being ruined by the size of our imports, and what a terrible thing it was for this country that we should make so much money as to be able to invest that money abroad. I do not propose to follow the noble Lord into these disquisitions, which, no doubt, are interesting, but which certainly are not pertinent to this discussion, but there was one thing which I noticed from the speech of the noble Lord and that of the noble Marquess who spoke before him, representing the Government. They told us the time had come for a reversal of our fiscal policy, but they carefully abstained from answering the questions put to them as to what were the measures they proposed. I should like again, if it would not be troubling the House, to appeal to the noble Earl who is going, I believe, to follow me in the debate this evening, and to ask him, although, I am afraid, in vain I put the question, on what, and against whom, are we going to retaliate. The Prime Minister, whose views in favour of free trade or protection I do not wish to refer to now, has told us fairly and frankly that he does not propose to retaliate either on the importation of food or raw materials, nor does he propose to retaliate on any of our colonies, therefore, he sets great limits to the possibilities of retaliation. With regard to the Colonies, we are apparently, so far as I can see, to take it lying down. We must therefore strike, as I understand it, at the imports from foreign countries alone, and not on food or raw material from those countries. These, then, are the limits of the policy of our retaliation. Now, my Lords, just let us see what the state of things is that we are fighting when we eliminate the imports from our colonies. The imports from foreign countries, and I take the year 1901, when they were at their highest, are returned at £417,000,000 in round numbers, of that amount, and I again take round numbers, £110,000,000 or £111,000,000 are eliminated from retaliation as raw material. £220,000,000 represent food, so that that again is eliminated from retaliation. Therefore we find that £330,000,000 odd, out of a total of £416,000,000 odd, of imports from foreign countries consists of food and raw material, and are eliminated from retaliation, and there is a miserable remnant of only some £86,000,000 or so, on which it is possible to retaliate. That may be taken to represent the importation of manufactured goods from protected foreign countries. Now, what about our exports of manufactured goods? Our exports to foreign countries of manufactured and part manufactured goods amount to £128,000,000. We all know that that sum has to be greatly increased, because the sum representing our exports does not include freight, insurance and other charges, elements which would bring that £128,000,000 up to a very much larger figure. At any rate, the exports, it will be seen at once, are much larger than the imports of foreign manufactured goods. Therefore there are countries who take from us much more manufactured goods than we take from them. Now, supposing we were to tax these imports heavily, they have a far more dangerous weapon in their hands if they retaliate upon us; but supposing they do, and supposing we adopt this policy, does retaliation produce the desired effect? My Lords, it is easy to speculate and say that it would, and it is equally easy to speculate and say that it would not. Therefore let us take a concrete instance, and it is the only instance—the best instance that I can find. In 1897 Canada offered preferential trade advantages to all countries fulfilling certain trade conditions of reciprocity; that is to say, Canada, having the weapon of retaliation in her hand in the shape of protective duties, offered to relax them in return for certain reciprocity in the importation of her goods. That is the same position that we should be in if we had imposed a retaliatory duty and offered to take it off if other countries fell in with our views and relaxed their duties in our favour. Now what was the result? Germany had a very high protective duty against the Canadian imports. Did Germany reduce her tariff in favour of Canada? We know she did not, and more than that she did not remain idle, because by the Treaty of 1865 Germany was entitled to the same treatment from the British colonies as from Great Britain, and she claimed from us the benefit of that treaty. And what was the result? My Lords, we were forced to denounce that treaty and we did denounce it in 1898. What did Germany then do? Germany immediately proceeded to refuse the benefit of the most-favoured-nation treaty to Canada; and more than that, she is now threatening actually that if any other British colonies follow the example of Canada she will refuse the most-favoured-nation treaty to the mother country itself. Could you, my Lords, have a more speaking instance of the result of retaliatory duties? And that, my Lords, is retaliation in its least offensive form. Well, my Lords, if retaliation in its least offensive form has failed, how can we seriously argue in favour of retaliation in a more offensive form?

My Lords, we are told to think Imperially. The noble Lord who has just sat down has accused us, upon these Benches, of wishing to embroil the mother country with the Colonies. I do not think that he is accusing us seriously of doing that, but merely playfully, and I take his accusation in that spirit, and I obey the almost royal command to think Imperially, and I will think of a country which is rather left out of calculation in this discussion. I will think of our great dependency of India. Now, in a minute which was dated the 22nd of October, 1903, the Government of India set out their views at length on the dangers of retaliation to them in these words—

> "If the United Kingdom should eventually resolve to adopt the policy of preferential tariffs or retaliation it is conceivable that the device of attacking her through her chief dependencies might receive further development at the hands of foreign countries."

My Lords, that is a very wise minute from a very important quarter, and, as India exports more than she imports, she is in the very happy position that the noble Lord would have this country to be in. India is a debtor country, she is paying a debt by excess of her exports over imports. My Lords, the immediate effect on that country of any retaliatory taxation by foreign countries against Indian imports to them, would injure if not wreck the financial stability of the country. Take the case which has already been mentioned in this debate, a small case, that has been urged in favour of retaliation. Take the case of the Sugar Convention. In the course of the negotiations which took place on that Convention, we undertook to prohibit the importation of raw sugar coming from any country which imposed a bounty. We had a contest with Russia as to whether or not she did give a bounty. We held that she did, she held that she did not, but we, holding that she did, prohibited the importation of Russian sugar. We thought it was a very innocent thing on our part, because we thought that really she was exporting nothing but the minutest quantity of raw sugar into this country. What was the result. She retaliated and raised her duty on Indian tea, which was already 250 per cent. *ad valorem.* It is quite true, my Lords, that the importation of Indian tea into Russia is a very small amount, but the financial adviser of the Indian Government, in the memorandum which has just been published, pointed out that, though small, it was a growing trade, and I do not think the Government were aware when they prohibited Russian sugar that in fact 800,000 lbs. of Indian tea goes to Russia annually, though it goes through London and Germany, but however it goes it gets there. Now this action on the part o Russia stops the growing market of the 120 millions of the greatest tea-drinkers in the world; people who might very likely, in times ahead, be clamouring to drink the greatest product that India can produce, her tea, and the result of this insane act, as I call it, financially insane on the part of the Government, has been to put an absolute stop to the growth of the trade. What is the result, we propose to put back again—it is like a game of tennis, we propose to put back again a higher duty on the importation of Russian petroleum into India, thereby making petroleum much more expensive to the Indian, the poorest subjects in the King's dominions. And so, my Lords, the game goes on. What has been the net result of these contentions. We have both entered into a retaliatory war, and there is no prospect even now of drawing closer to the ideals of free trade, which is, I believe, the object noble Lords put before them as the ideal for their action.

Now all these theories about retaliatory duties assume that you will conquer your opponents when you put your duty on. But supposing you do not, and if noble Lords opposite think that is absurd, will the noble Lord who is going to reply to me quote to us a single concrete case in which the imposition of retaliatory duty has led to the withdrawal of the duty which it was intended to combat. If the noble Lord can do this, he would advance his argument some way; if he cannot, how can he prevent us from believing that the duty we impose will not have the desired effect and therefore will remain. But we shall have a tariff war, and in the meantime large vested interests will arise through the industry protected by the duty, which will clamour loudly of the extinction of their industry when the duty is finally taken off. I do not wish to enter into a general discussion now, but I think these questions have a bearing upon the whole subject and I shall be very glad if the noble Lord can answer any one of them.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): I cannot make any complaint as to the Question that has been asked me by the noble Lord opposite, but I think I shall be able to show your Lordships that the noble Lord has very far from presented the whole case, and that there is an answer to the Question that he has asked. He began by asking against whom the Government proposed to retaliate, and how they proposed to do it; and he then went on to show by the process of exhaustion that the possible area of retaliation was reduced to about £86,000,000 of foreign imports into this country. I have no means of checking those figures, and I assume they are correct, so that the noble Lord's conception is that that sum represents the limit of our influence in this matter. If it were so, that sum is no small one, but the fact is that the trade with the United Kingdom is as a whole of infinite value to those nations, which have far more to lose than we have, if we look at the markets open to them. All that side of the case is ignored by the noble Lord. Then he takes the case of Germany and Canada. I may point out that the interest of Germany in Canadian trade is very little compared with the interest of Germany in its trade with the United Kingdom. Then to my astonishment the noble Lord went further and said that Germany was far from giving way to Canada, for Germany actually threatened to retaliate against this country if any other of our Colonies offered us special preference. My Lords, that is quite true. Germany did threaten, but when we showed we would not submit, Germany withdrew her threats. That is an absolute instance of what may be done, not only by retaliation, but by the mere whisper of retaliation. Then, my Lords, the noble Lord proceeded to state the case of India. I agree with him in so far that the Indian case has not received the attention it deserves. In dealing with this question, we cannot be too careful to bear the interests of India in mind; but, my Lords, I would ask those who have not yet had the opportunity of reading the despatch of the Indian Government on this subject, to suspend their judgment until they have done so, because the presentation of the case by the noble Lord falls very far short of completeness. My Lords, he quoted the despatch of the Indian Government, but quite forgot to mention that Sir Edward Law, the financial member of the Council, goes through the countries with which India is trading, and shows how impossible it would be for any of those countries to retaliate against India. Further, in the Blue-book, there is a case of the effective result of negotiations between France and India on the lines of Mr. Cobden's French treaty, which enabled India, at a small sacrifice, to gain a considerable advantage. In respect to that story of the tea, although the noble Lord quoted the despatch of the Government of India with approval in one place, he forgot to mention that his views with regard to the tea controversy are not those of the Government of India. He then asked, as clinching his argument, whether I could name a case where retaliatory duties had been imposed and were successful in their object, and were finally withdrawn. Yes, my Lords, I can quote a case. I do not quote it with approval, I quote it as an historical answer to the Question of the noble Lord. I refer to the famous tariff war between Russia and Germany. In that case a retaliatory duty was imposed; a tariff war ensued, negotiations supervened, an arrangement agreeable to both countries was arrived at, the duties were withdrawn and a great increase in the volume of trade followed. I think that is a fair answer to the Question.

The noble Lord, Lord Avebury, in the course of his speech—I do not quote his exact words—implied that the most-favoured-nation clause was the sheet anchor of British commerce. I do not believe there is much truth in such a suggestion. I believe that that belief is a delusion, and for the reason that when Continental nations make those treaties the very last country whose interest they consider is the United Kingdom. France, when she makes a treaty with Germany—I take a hypothetical case here of the course she would take with regard to the woollen and cotton industries—she not only makes terms which are convenient to herself, but she very carefully considers whether those terms will give as little advantage to British woollen and cotton goods as possible; and the extreme sub-divisions with regard to this class of goods are such as to make it possible to make a treaty of no advantage to any country but the contries who are parties to the making of the treaty. The noble Lord was guilty, if I may say so, of the same inconsistency that I detected in the speech of Lord Tweedmouth. The noble Lords say, suppose you put on a retaliatory duty, and after some time you withdraw it, having gained your object, think of the difficulties of the industries which have grown up under that treaty, and the difficulty of the capitalists and the employment of the workmen! But, in the next breath, they tell us that dumping is good for this country and they never think of the capitalists who are undersold, or the workmen who have lost employment, through dumped goods. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and the same interest as is shown in the industry fostered by retaliation should attach to the native industry undermined by dumped goods. Lord Avebury made the point that our trade is bigger than that of Germany; so it is, but how much bigger was it twenty-five years ago? I will come to that point at more length presently, but in the whole consideration of this question the Government take their stand on what the Prime Minister said, that we have to study on this occasion the dynamics and not the statics of the case.

Now I should like to say a word or two as to the remarks of the noble Lord, Lord Tweedmouth. He compared my noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh to a leaf. He spoke of the divergence of opinion in the Government on this question with the sympathy which could only be shown by one who had himself passed through deep waters. He said he had not the faintest idea what the policy of the Government was, but he proceeded to explain that he was definitely opposed to it. The noble Lord begged the whole question by stating that retaliation and preference both mean the restriction of wages, and then he passed on to press us in the form of the Motion of the noble Lord Crewe for a clear definition of our aims. Now, on this point there is no possibility of the Government and the Opposition seeing the case from the same point of view. Let us have that clear understanding between us. You do not believe in the policy of retaliation, we do. You want to wreck it; we want to preserve it; and therefore we consider and study your arguments and cross-examinings from that standpoint. Now my Lords, I must ask your Lordships to pardon me if I try to establish what I may call the basis of the Government's position in this matter, and also the basis of the opposition of our opponents. Our opponents say the country is in a state of great prosperity, why not leave things alone? We admit that prosperity. You ask us still more pointedly, "Then why not leave things alone." We ask you, "Are there no bad signs; are there no signs so bad as to be absolutely omnious"? After all, in private life, if on a summer's day a black cloud comes upon the horizon it is not considered to be the most sensible thing for a man to say, "It has been fine; it is fine, and therefore it will be fine." Of all the optimistic statements that I have heard for some time the statement of the noble Lord, Lord Avebury, was the most optimistic, and I shall ask your Lordships to consider with me at some little length whether there are signs which can fairly be described as ominous and foreboding. Lastly, my Lords, there are those among your Lordships, who say "Even if there are bad signs the remedy proposed is worse than the disease, because the whole of the prosperity of this country is founded on a system of free imports." Indeed there are people—I do not say there are any in your Lordships' House—who are so prejudiced upon this subject that they would lead one to think that every step in the development of the human race from the conception of the Ark to the discovery of radium was due to free imports. I ask your Lordships to consider with me, is this a true description of the basis of our prosperity, and whether there are or are not ominous signs on the horizon.

My noble friend just now quoted a Blue-book which has had much too little attention during this controversy. I do not mean the Blue-book which has just been published, but the one published a year before this controversy began. The memorandum on British and Foreign Trade published by the Board of Trade in 1902, after comparing the decreasing rate of the growth of our population with that of Germany and the United States—this memorandum written a year before this controversy began—goes on in these words—

> "Both Germany and the United States have both attained to the position of increasing their non-agricultural population more quickly than the United Kingdom. The conclusion, therefore, would seem to be that the days of the manufacturing and industrial predominance of the United Kingdom, and even of its manufacturing and industrial pre-eminence, seem likely to be far from what they were."

My next point is a sign of this decline in our manufacturing and industrial pre-eminence. In 1880 I find that Germany and the United States combined did not equal our output of pig-iron. Last year they produced more than three times the quantity which we did. That was from 1880 to 1903. I find in 1890 these two countries combined made less than twice as much steel as we did, and now they make more than four times as much. That is in the space of eleven years. I find in the same Blue-book a comparison of the exports of manufactures. The five years average from 1880 to 1884 and from 1896 to 1900. The noble Lord will perhaps allow me to correct him. He said last year was our greatest year for exports. The greatest year was 1900, and therefore the years 1896 to 1900 cover our greatest period of exports. During that period the exports of France increased 12·3 per cent., those of Germany 36·6 per cent., and those of the United States 153·9 per cent., whilst those of the United Kingdom remained absolutely stationary. The observation of the Board of Trade as to these figures is as follows—

> "The fact of large expansion in the case of Germany and the United States taken in conjunction with the stationary condition of affairs as regards the United Kingdom is not so satisfactory as could be wished."

The last case I will take I think is the most important of all. This is from the recently published Blue-book. All articles of British produce are divided into sections in the Blue-book, one the exports to the principal protected countries, and one to the non-protected countries and to the British Empire, and we find the exports to the principal protected countries is £100,000,000, but to the non-protected countries and to the British Empire £176,000,000, which is a complete reversal of the position of fifty years ago. Now I want to dwell upon this. Whatever the views of your Lordships may be on this fiscal controversy, not one of you will deny the enormous importance of these figures in regard to this question of non-protected and Imperial markets. By what force do we hold those markets. That is a question I particularly want your Lordships to ask yourselves. By what force do we hold those markets, which are absolutely essential to the existence of our population, because later on in the Blue-book it is shown that from one-fifth or one-sixth of the whole wages bill of this country is due to foreign trade. Now I will divide these markets into three classes. First of all there are the foreign countries, like the South American Republics, which are absolutely independent. It is in their power to become highly protected countries to-morrow, and they could make a reciprocity treaty with other countries, like the United States, to-morrow. We hold those markets wholly and solely by the pure goodwill of those countries. Then there are the markets in the self-governing colonies which we also hold by the pure goodwill of those colonies. They are perfectly free to become more protective or to make a reciprocity arrangement with other countries, and thus ensure that the trade should pass from us. Such an arrangement between Canada and the United States has been frequently mentioned, but I hope we shall never see it put into force. But our tenure of those markets is dependent, not on ourselves, but on the Colonies. Lastly, I come to that part of the Empire which does not enjoy self-government—India, the Malay States, and those tropical and semi-tropical colonies your Lordships know so well, and I class with them China and countries like her, where we hold special treaty rights in respect of trade. What is our tenure of those markets? It is the tenure of the sword and of the sword alone. We hold those markets by the strength of the right arm of the nation, and I wonder, with the Prime Minister, that it has ever been thought compatible that with a system of free imports we should have a small Army and a reduced Navy? Have your Lordships considered how many of these markets have been wrested from us in the last few years. There are the recent losses of the markets of the Phillipines and Hawaii and Cuba and Puerto Rico, and also of Tunis and Madagascar. It is not an exaggeration to say that the unoccupied portion of the world in which we have no treaty rights, or which do not come under the British flag but which are absorbed by another nation, pass into that division of protected markets in which our trade is constantly dwindling. Should we have no opportunity of retaliating again in such a case, may we say, as Madagascar and Tunis? Therefore, I say, in the view of the Government, the case is established. There are black clouds on the horizon, and there are signs which reasonably cause great misgiving.

Now I would ask your Lordships another question. Are we right or are we wrong to revolt, because that is a word that may be fairly used, against this exercise of authority which would debar us from examining as to whether our prosperity is really due solely to this system of free imports? Let us try and get at the historical truth of this matter. Even to-night I have heard expressions which would lead one to suppose that those who use them think that our prosperity only began sixty years ago. I think my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth said it was during this period that London had become the commercial centre of the universe.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: No.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I beg the noble Lord's pardon. Some other noble Lord used that expression, but let your Lordships consider there was not one of our great industries which was not in existence sixty years ago. Sixty years ago we were commercially supreme, and had no rivals. Sixty years ago London was the commercial capital of the world, as it is to-day. But Hamburg and Antwerp to-day are great rivals. Every one of our staple trades—iron, cotton, wool, linen, was established long before sixty years ago, and, my Lords, the truth is not that our prosperity was created by the policy adopted sixty years ago, but that it has greatly increased under that policy. I am glad to see that the noble Duke is in his place. In his speech the other day at the Guildhall the noble Duke used these words—

> "I know there are some who are bold enough to argue that the country was prosperous before free trade. I do not believe anyone will be bold enough to come to the Guildhall and make that assertion."

What I want to find out to-night is, what is the historic test in this matter? The first test I apply is the noble Duke's own test. The noble Duke a little later said—

> "The Board of Trade has made an estimate, an estimate which I have not seen questioned, that, measured by a constant and not by a fluctuating standard, computed at the prices of a certain year, and assuming those prices to remain the volume and quantity of our trade has increased in the last thirty years—as to our imports it has doubled, and as to our exports it has increased by 60 per cent."

Now I agree with the noble Duke that this is an interesting test of the measure of prosperity, but I think he forgot to apply that same test and that same standard to the thirty years before free imports. The figures of the Board of Trade for the period, and I have them here, show instead of an increase of 60 per cent., an increase of over 300 per cent., and that is the period as to which the noble Duke says he cannot understand anybody saying there was any prosperity in it. But there are authorities to be found on this matter. Has the noble Duke ever studied the classical work of that time—Porter's "Progress of the Nation?" It is a voluminous work of infinite research, which goes through every trade and class of population; the work of an enthusiastic free-trader and an out and out supporter of Mr. Cobden and of the repeal of the Corn Laws. The author thought the millennium had come because the Corn Laws had been repealed. He was perfectly fair in the treatment of his subject and you will find, my Lords, many allusions to the dark shadows of that time. The misery of the population is depicted in glowing colours; but judging the nation as a whole by the facts as he found them and by the statistics of that time, what is the judgment of this man of the state of the prosperity of the nation? The year is the year 1847, and this is what he says at page 530—

> "Not only is the proportion of persons in the community who pass their lives in active industry labouring with their hands or their

heads greater in this than in almost any other well-peopled country in Europe, but the amount of skilled labour performed in a given time by any given number of their countrymen is commonly greater than that accomplished by the like number of any other people in Europe. To this circumstance it is in a great part owing that, with a higher rate of daily wages paid for fewer hours of toil than are required in other countries, our manufacturers have been able under other adverse circumstances to maintain superiority over their rivals."

And on page 600 there is this remarkable verdict—

> "This fact appears so amply confirmed by proofs that meet us on every side—proofs admitting of no doubts and incapable of receiving any other interpretation—that it is marvellous how they can escape the notice of any one or fail to produce the universal conviction that if we have not made such progress as our means should have enabled us towards the well-being of all classes of the community, we have yet during the present century, and especially within the last twenty-five years, made great advances in that direction, greater perhaps than were ever before realised by peaceful means and by any community in any equal period of time."

Now, my Lords, I think that those quotations prove, that judged by the standard of that time, not by our standard—judged by what the world then knew and the conditions of other countries in the world—England at that time was prosperous. The fact is, that exactly the same argument that is now used against the Government for raising this question and the arguments drawn from the prosperity of the country by the present opponents of the Government are the same as those used by the supporters of the old system against the anti-Corn Law League of that time and no less a person used it than Sir Robert Peel. This is what he said on 11th. February, 1839—

> "That statement must have confirmed those who were formerly wavering in their support of the Corn Laws, must have removed the doubts of those who hesitated and had not made up their opinion, and convinced all men that the manufacturing and commercial interests of this country were in the most flourishing and prosperous condition."

On the 15th March, a month later, he made exactly the same speech *mutatis mutandis* and used the same arguments as Lord Goschen used last July. On 15th March, reverting to the same subject, he went through the trade returns and savings bank returns, in great minuteness, showing how great had been the increase in population and wealth of great cities and in their powers of consumption. Yes, my Lords, but it may be replied to that, that Sir Robert Peel changed his mind a year or two later. That is quite true. Why? Because at the time I spoke of he was looking only at the present prosperity. He shut his eyes to the clouds on the horizon until he was overwhelmed by the storm and had to yield to facts. Perhaps history will repeat itself.

Now, my Lords, dealing with this question of free imports. It is a fair question to ask, and it has never been fairly answered: if all our prosperity has been due to free imports, to what has the prosperity of other countries been due? The noble Lord, Lord Avebury, said that their prosperity was in despite of their fiscal system. I do not think that is a reasonable answer; for most Germans would claim that their prosperity was due to protection, and that would be as fair an argument for them to use as is Lord Avebury's claim, that all our prosperity is due to the system of free imports. The fact is, that the effects of both these systems have been exceedingly over-estimated by their respective advocates. I say that both these fiscal systems have been but small contributors to the aggregate of causes of prosperity. What has been the real operative cause of the great prosperity of this country and of other countries in the last half century? It is that their natural resources, their position in the world, the characteristics of their people, and the natural products of the soil, all these giant resources have been raised from their long slumber by the fairy touch of steam and of gold. It is the world-wide influence of steam transport with the great lubricating influence of gold that has been at the root of the prosperity of this country and of that of other nations, and it is because we hold this view that we do not propose this policy of retaliation with the fear and trembling of our opponents, and that we do not bar the consideration of this question by the plea of an infallible system. After all, it would have been strange indeed if the system of free imports had produced all the great results attributed to it, considering that [no] man ever devised the

The Earl of Selborne.

system, and that it was the result of a great though honest miscalculation. We believe Sir Robert Peel improved the system he found; we believe it is in our power to improve the system we find, and we do not believe that the fiscal system is the only part of our political system in which no improvement is possible. We believe in retaliation as a policy and as an instrument. We do not believe it is impossible for us to use it with great advantage. We do not share the views of our opponents that it is a weapon too dangerous to be touched, and we are quite unable to agree with them that in the whole field of human experience the only bargain in which you do better for yourself by having nothing to give and nothing to withhold is, a commercial treaty between two nations. Now, why do we not answer the Questions put to us by our opponents; Questions which endeavour to extract from us in advance the methods by which we shall carry out this policy if the country trusts us? The reason is, my Lords, because we know those questions are only devised with the object of tying our hands. We do not pretend to see all the circumstances which may face us when we come again to power.

*A NOBLE LORD: That may be a long time.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: We have never had any idea of withdrawing this question from the control of Parliament. We could not if we would, and we would not if we could, but, as the Amendment of my noble friend shows, we are not prepared to lay down stringent and minute rules in advance for the guidance of Parliaments which have not yet been born. On this question it has been a great misfortune to us to differ from some of our closest and most intimate political friends. That difference is no light matter. We have not been in close comradeship with them for the last eighteen years without realising the priceless value of their personal and political friendship, and we know from experience that the only motives that guide them in these matters are motives of patriotism and of duty, and we are able to measure the strength of their convictions upon this subject by the magnitude of the risk they are prepared to run. They are prepared to run the risk of putting into power men who, if they could, would undo the work which they themselves have devoted their lives to during the past eighteen years. They are prepared to run the risk of Home Rule for Ireland and of wrecking that educational policy to which we and they alike stand committed. Therefore we are able to measure the strength of their convictions. Why is it so? It is because we are confirmed supporters of retaliation, because we refuse to join in the ban of preference to our colonies. It is one of the principal causes of separation between us that we refuse to join them in banning preferences. They have their ideal, but it seems to us dwarfed by excessive veneration of the past and undue timidity with regard to the future. We know they are genuine, but we, too, have our ideals. It has been insinuated, not in your Lordships' House, or by anyone who has spoken to-night, but it has been insinuated more than once that those who differ from us are the only ones who reckon in any way on the moral forces that makes a nation. That statement is as clearly devoid of truth as it is divorced from charity. We desire that this country should not only remain a great commercial nation, but the predominant commercial nation. We do not desire our population to dwindle. We desire that the rate of growth of population should increase, and we desire by our policy and by our acts to enlarge the area of employment for the people of this country and so continue the process of the development of their welfare, and it is with that object in view that we take up retaliation as a practical means to a practical end. We refuse to join in the ban of preference not because preference is the policy we are putting before the people, but because the future consolidation of this Empire is to us a noble and glorious ideal, and we will not join with those who, whether they share that ideal or not, say in advance that there cannot be any road to progress in that ideal through any form of preference.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: My Lords, not being a financier or an economist, I should not have risen at all in this debate, but that I wish to call attention for a few moments to one aspect of the question which has not yet received much attention either in Parliament or out of doors. The noble Lord, Lord Donoughmore, who spoke recently from the Government bench, alluded to the bearing which this question has to Ireland. That is the aspect that especially comes home to me, and I am glad that this sentiment finds an echo on the Treasury Bench. I was somewhat disappointed, after my hopes had been raised by the noble Lord, at his not pursuing the subject a little farther and explaining to us in what way the Government policy would benefit Ireland. But before I go into that more elementary portion of the question I wish for a very few moments to say a few words on the more general part of the subject. My Lords, the noble Earl dealt, in the eloquent speech he has just delivered, largely with retaliation, and his speech also contained a defence, I think, of the principle of protection, because, as I understood, although he did not go the length of saying it, that free imports were responsible for our failure to maintain our predominance in trade, or, at all events, we could not set down to the credit of free imports our commercial prosperity—

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I am sorry if the noble Lord misunderstood me. I did not argue in that direction in the least. What I said was that neither the free imports of this country nor the protection of Germany were the true causes of the prosperity of those countries.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: I am sorry if I misunderstood the noble Lord. I understood him to say that free imports and protection had been regarded with undue importance in both countries, and I understood that the moral he drew was that retaliation was the one road to salvation.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: No, the moral I drew was that there was not this grave danger lurking behind the reversal of our present fiscal system that others seem to indicate.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: I understood the noble Lord to argue from the state of affairs he presented that there were dark clouds on the horizon and disquieting signs that we must consider, and that, while he did not ban preference, all the Government had to propose for the present was a system of retaliation. Well, my Lords, I confess that, although I have no objection to the principle of retaliation, I cannot see that it will take us very far on. If the state of our affairs is so serious, the way to combat that is by a satisfactory fiscal policy to deal with a great emergency. The Motion of the noble Earl which is upon the Paper deals, I think, chiefly, if not exclusively, with retaliation, and I wish therefore to address myself to that question. As I understood the noble Earl, noble Lords on that Bench are not against retaliation in principle if it can be shown to have a fair chance of proving effective, and if it can be shown that you have a chance of carrying it out without incurring greater disadvantages than those which you remove. But I think we all want to know in what spirit retaliation is to be carried on. The Government have put forward a system of retaliation as a road to free exchange, but, my Lords, it is admitted if the threat of retaliation is not sufficient to procure that free exchange, and if you carry out your threat and impose a retaliatory tax and that is not sufficient to procure a free exchange, that, then, the tax will remain. In that case the tax becomes protective, and, therefore, unless your retaliation is successful it does become protection. That in itself is enough to give serious pause to us before we embark in retaliation as one of the main portions of our fiscal policy. But, my Lords, the Government has been applied to several times to give your Lordships a concrete case where retaliation had been successful, and the noble Earl triumphantly produced the case of the tariff war between Germany and Russia.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Lord, but the noble Lord rather misrepresents me. I did not in any way stand godfather to the quarrel between Germany and Russia, but gave it as an historical case, and I think it met the question.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: I thought that the Question the noble

Lord, Lord Coleridge asked was, whether there was any case of successful retaliation, and I understood the noble Earl to quote this case. I should like to ask the Government now, if no answer has been given to the Question already, can they point to a case of successful retaliation where the retaliation has produced the desired effect which they aim at? As regards the tariff war to which the noble Earl referred I believe, in that case, there was great injury inflicted on both sides, stringent measures were taken, heavy taxes were imposed, neither side would give way, and that condition of things went on for years.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: For nine months only.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: Well, for however long it lasted, it will not be disputed that large losses were incurred; that the parties arrived eventually at the *status quo ante*, and that it was really a drawn battle. I do not suppose that the tax of which Germany complained was withdrawn or that Germany attained her ends through that tariff war. But, my Lords, my point is that though I should be quite glad to see retaliation tried as an engine of free trade, I should very strongly object to see it used as an engine of protection. You have then a serious danger of its becoming an engine of protection. How is it to be carried out? I must say that I agree with the Government that it would be very difficult effectively to carry on negotiations between this country and another, unless the Government have something in the nature of a mandate. I think it is only natural that the Government should ask for a mandate, but when we come to consider how this power which is to be given to the Government, if the Government succeed in obtaining the mandate, is to be used, I think the danger of its leading to protection is very great, and that it becomes very important indeed to see what control should be exercised over it. I think the Questions which the noble Earl has asked are extremely pertinent to the issue. When we are asked to trust a Government in this matter we want to know who we are to trust. We know that there are in the Unionist Party two sections, and we are told that we cannot know what is to be done in this matter until after the general election. But when we are asked to accept the policy and asked to write a blank cheque in this way now, I think it is a very dubious proceeding.

Coming to the question as to how retaliation would affect Ireland it seems to me that retaliation can have very little effect in Ireland one way or the other. The only large industries upon which it could have any beneficial effects are the linen and shipbuilding industries. Now, my Lords, everybody knows that the shipbuilding industry would be very seriously injured by any tampering with free imports, and that even dumping is beneficial to the shipbuilding industry, therefore we will put that on one side. Now with regard to linen we find our principal exports in linen from the United Kingdom, I have not the figures with regard to Ireland separately, seem to rise as the duty rises. It is a very curious thing that half the whole exports go to the United States where the duty is very high, £2,000,000 out of £6,000,000 to Germany, where the duty is moderately high, and a proportion to Belgium, a country which could hardly be called protected and which exports a good deal more linen than she takes. Now the markets most important to the linen manufacturers would no doubt be the American and German markets, but if you were to attempt negotiations on the basis suggested I am afraid we might come off worst, because no doubt other matters like dumped steel would come in, and we might even suffer from further reprisals from these countries. Therefore it seems to me that that great staple trade could not be favoured by retaliation. As regards agricultural exports, the main production of Ireland, there is no case at all in that. Agricultural produce we export mainly to the United Kingdom. If there is no duty against us no duty is to be put on, and, as the noble Lord has pointed out, retaliation can hardly assist the farmer in any part of the United Kingdom. In Ireland there can be no half-way house between retaliation and protection. Protection is the only thing the Irish farmer would thank you for, and I hope he will not have the temptation put before him. It is much better, in my opinion, to rely like the Danish farmer on free trade, and with the help of education to develop self-help in the Irish farmer, who would then be able to give a good account of himself in the future. I will not detain your Lordships longer.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD: On behalf of the noble Lord the Duke of Devonshire I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at half-past Eleven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 18th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz:—Torquay Tramways Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Docks); Clyde Navigation (Works).

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following case, viz.:—Mid-Cheshire Tramways.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill. "To enable the London County Council to construct and work new tramways in the counties of London and Middlesex; to alter and re-construct tramways in the county of London; to make street improvements in the counties of London, Kent, and Middlesex; to empower the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich to construct a new street; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Rotherham Corporation Bill. "To provide for altering the wards of the County Borough of Rotherham and for increasing the number of aldermen and councillors; to confer further powers on the Corporation of the borough in regard to their gas, water, tramways, and electrical undertakings; to make further provisions for the health, improvement, and local government of the borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Kidderminster; Shipley; Southend; Birmingham; Stoke Newington; Crigglestone; Knaresborough; Sunderland; Walton-on-the-Hill; Blandford; Salisbury (two); Lewisham; Gronant; Newcastle-on-Tyne (two); Liverpool (three); Coventry (two); Whixall; Ware; Preston (three); Ravensthorpe; Thurso; Fleetwood; Aberdeen; Neath; Stourbridge; Berwick-on-Tweed; Stromness; Settle; Hirwain; Aberdare; Troedyrhiw (three); Cwmdare; Merthyr Tydfil; Eccles; Bethesda; Eccleshill; Low Moor; Wibsey; Idle; Queensbury; Barton; Pendlebury; Whitchurch;

Halifax; Bristol; Clydebank; Sheffield; Woodhouse; Edinburgh (two); East Kirkby; Pensarn; Soar; Bermondsey; Tottenham; Tanygroes; Bethesda; Dyffryn Dyfi; Battersea; and Aberdovey; to lie upon the Table.

PAYMENT OF JURORS.

Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF GROUND RENTS AND VALUES.

Petition from Battersea, for legislation; to lie upon the Table

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.

Abstract Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 66.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into charities (Gateshead County Borough). Return relative thereto [ordered 9th February; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 67.]

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST (STAFF AND EQUIPMENT).

Return ordered, "of Copy of (1) Resolutions adopted by the Council of Queen's College, Belfast, on the 4th December, 1903, and by the Corporate Body on 9th December, 1903; (2) Irish Government Letter of 17th December, 1903, in acknowledgment of same; (3) Letter of 11th January, 1904, from the President of University College, Dublin; and (4) Irish Government Letter of 15th January, 1904, in acknowledgment of same."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 68.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Russia and the Treaty of Aigun.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, having regard to the breach by Russia of the Convention to evacuate Manchuria, the Foreign Office has proposed to the Chinese Government that they should denounce the Treaty of Aigun, whereby the navigation of the Amur, Sungari, and Ussuri was opened by China to Russia exclusively.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Government do not consider that failure on the part of Russia to execute the provisions of the Convention for the evacuation of Manchuria would justify them in recommending the Chinese Government to denounce the Treaty of Aigun, which has been in force since 1858, and to which no objection has hitherto been taken.

Atrocities on the Congo—Action of the Powers.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present position of our negotiations with the other European Powers with regard to the alleged atrocities in the treatment of natives in the Congo State and the necessity of bringing that treatment before a competent tribunal to sift the evidence and, if proved, provide adequate remedies for the prevention of cruelties alleged to be practised in Mid Africa.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Government have addressed communications to the Powers on the subject referred to by the hon. Member, and no replies have yet been received.

Sugar Refineries in East London—Persons Employed.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of persons employed in sugar refineries in the East End of London for 1872, 1882, 1892 and 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am unable to supply the hon.

Member with the figures he desires for the years mentioned. The nearest information in my possession is as follows :—The Return of Persons Employed in 1901 (now in course of preparation), shows 1,969 persons employed in sugar refineries in the East of London and the adjoining part of Essex ; and the Return for 1895 shows 1,552 persons employed for the same area ; in both years the number employed in the East of London forming only a small part of the total. A Return for 1889–90 shows no persons employed in the East of London and 1,758 employed in the adjoining part of Essex ; and a Return for 1870–1871 shows 1,332 persons employed in Essex and Middlesex together. In the last mentioned years, however, the statutory definition of factory was different from the present definition in the Factory Act, and the figures do not admit of comparison.

Condition of Mrs. Maybrick's Release.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mrs. Maybrick will be released under any general rule applicable to all female convicts similarly situated; if not, whether he will state the grounds for her release; and whether any, and, if any, how many, female convicts who are now in prison have been confined for a longer period than Mrs. Maybrick's term of actual imprisonment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The circumstances of female convicts under life sentences vary so much that there can be no general rule applicable to all. Each case has to be considered on its merits, and each case is so considered from time to time. It would be contrary to practice to state the grounds on which the prerogative of mercy is exercised in any case. No female convict is now in custody who has been confined for a longer period than Mrs. Maybrick has been; but this fact does not imply any rule as to the maximum detention of female convicts.

Prison Commissioners and Public Contracts.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Prison Commissioners have been exhibiting to tenderers samples of foreign-made canvas, to be made in the prisons of the United Kingdom into mail bags and other goods for the Post Office ; that, contrary to the practice of all other Departments, the Prison Commissioners contract with middlemen instead of directly with manufacturers, and that in recent years these middlemen have negotiated large contracts for the Government with French and Belgian firms ; and whether he will communicate with the Prison Commissioners in order to bring their method of contracting into line with that of other Government Departments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have referred to the Prison Commissioners in this matter, and am informed that they do not know the country of origin of the samples of canvas which are, in the ordinary course, offered for inspection to persons wishing to tender. They are the usual samples as obtained from various contractors, and, in any case, it is not implied that the tenders should be for foreign-made material. As regards the practice pursued by the Commissioners in inviting tenders, the proposed contracts, which are advertised extensively, are open to anyone, whether manufacturer or middleman, subject to the usual inquiries as to his capacity, respectability, etc. The Commissioners are of opinion that their peculiar circumstances, in having no facilities for storage, and being obliged to arrange for supplies to be delivered as wanted, in small quantities and at many different prisons on the requisition from time to time of governors, would, if the contracts were confined to large manufacturers, by adopting the practice of some other public Departments, whose circumstances are different, impose an inconvenient limit on the area of competition and might lead to a great increase in prices. Having regard to the requirements of the prison service, I see no sufficient reason for disturbing the present practice. I may add that, as a fact, under the existing contracts made in accordance with that practice, at least four-fifths of the canvas supplied are British-made.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates—Case of Mr. Pratt, of Balderton.

Mr. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that Mr. Pratt, of Balderton, applied three times to the Newark County Petty Sessions for an exemption certificate from vaccination for his child and was refused, and that on the first two occasions his application was rejected because he had not a medical certificate that his child was unfit for vaccination; and whether, in view of the misapprehension among many magistrates as to their duties in this matter, he will propose amending legislation, substituting a statutory declaration of conscientious objection for the present application to the magistrates.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have been made aware of this case by a letter from Mr. Pratt. The question of amending the Vaccination Acts does not fall within my Department.

Rateable Value of Sugar Refineries in East End of London.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the rateable value of sugar refineries in the East End of London for 1872, 1882, 1892, and 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am sorry that I am not in possession of the information for which my hon. friend asks.

Russo-Japanese War—Interruptions of Mail Service.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Postmaster-General what, if any, alterations have been made in the mail service between the United Kingdom, British colonies or possessions, and Japan, consequent upon the outbreak of war between Japan and Russia.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The mail service to the Far East viâ Russia and Siberia is suspended; and correspondence marked for conveyance by that route has to be sent viâ Suez or across America as the case may be. Otherwise no alterations have been made in the arrangements connected with the transmission of mails between the United Kingdom, her colonies and possessions, and Japan.

Postal Telegrams—Assimilation of Charges for Corresponding Words.

SIR ROBERT HERMON-HODGE (Oxfordshire, Henley): To ask the Postmaster-General why it is that Goring-on-Thames counts as three words in a telegram, while Henley-on-Thames counts as one; and whether he will give instructions that in future Goring-on-Thames shall count as one word instead of three.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) "Henley-on-Thames" is accepted as one word in telegrams under the rule which says that "all names of towns and villages in the United Kingdom are counted as one word each." Goring on Thames does not come under this rule because it is not the name of a town or village. The name of the village near Reading is Goring.

New Road from Charing Cross to Mall—Date of Opening.

MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): To ask the hon. Member for the Chorley Division, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he can state when the new road from Charing Cross to the Mall is to be opened for traffic.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) This work cannot be carried out until funds are provided, and the Metropolitan Improvements (Funds) Bill now awaiting Second Reading has been introduced for that purpose.

Agricultural Banks in India.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state how many agricultural banks have been established in the different provinces of India up to the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Papers presented last session on the subject of the establishment of agricultural banks in India contain the available information as to the number of these banks which are at present in existence. More exact information will be obtained when the Bill before the Viceroy's Legislative Council to provide for their registration and working becomes law.

Irrigation Works in India—Proposed Expenditure.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what sum it is proposed to spend on irrigation works in each Province of India during the present year, and when some of the irrigation works recommended in the Report of the Irrigation Commission are likely to be commenced.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The information desired by the hon. Member on the subject of the amount which it is proposed to spend on irrigation during the next financial year will be given, as usual, in the Financial Statement, which will, in due course, be presented to Parliament. I am awaiting the views of the Government of India regarding the action that should be taken on the recommendations of the Irrigation Commission.

Siemship of Cherra Native State, Assam.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received memorials from the people of the Cherra Native State, Assam, and from the ruling twelve clans of that State protesting against the action of the Government of India in overruling a decision of the late Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir Henry Cotton, in regard to the appointment of a successor to the late Siem (Chief) U Hajon Manick, who died on the 24th May, 1901; and whether, seeing that Chundra Singh, the nearest relative of the late Siem, was always recognised during that chieftain's lifetime as the heir-apparent to the Siemship, and that the Khardarkar, or representatives of the twelve clans, on whom from time immemorial the election to a vacant Siemship has devolved, elected Chundra Singh by a majority of 8 to 4, will he explain why the decision of the late Chief Commissioner of Assam was reversed by the Government of India in favour of U Roba Singh, and will the question of succession be reconsidered.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Memorials were received in 1902 from Chundra Singh, the rejected candidate for the Siemship of Cherra, and from representatives of the twelve clans who supported his claims. The Government of India, having regard to precedents and to all the circumstances of the case, were unable to approve the recommendation of the Chief Commissioner that the decision of the majority of the Durbar, referred to by the hon. Member, at which only the twelve heads of the clans constituting the State were present, should be accepted, and ordered a popular election to be held, at which Roba Singh was chosen unanimously. The Government of India thereon confirmed Roba Singh as chief. The case has been very fully considered both by the Government of India and the Secretary of State in Council. I see no reason for reopening the question.

Maintenance of County Dublin Infirmary.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what was the contribution out of the county cess or the poor rate by the governors and governesses, and from any other source, towards the maintenance of the County Dublin Infirmary in the years 1897 and 1898, and what was the proportion of the contribution out of the county cess or poor rate towards the building of that institution.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The sources of income of the Meath Hospital and County Dublin Infirmary for the years ended 31st March, 1897, 1898, and 1901 are shown in the following table:—

	1896–7.	1897–8.	1900–1.
	£	£	£
County Presentment -	1,000	1,000	1,000
Contributions from Governors and Subscribers - - -	1,487	1,995	1,622
All other sources -	3,249	2,831	2,992
Total -	5,736	5,826	5,614

It is stated in the Report of the Dublin Hospitals Commission, which was presented to Parliament in 1887, that the hospital as it was then reported upon, was built at a cost of £12,876, partly contributed by private subscription and partly by grants from the Grand Jury. The latter grants, I understand, amounted to £4,788. No grants have since been made from county sources for building purposes. A further sum of £17,393 has been expended on new buildings since the date of the Report, all of which was privately provided.

Police at Ballynahinch, County Down.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state why a head constable in the town of Ballynahinch, county Down, where there is one sergeant and five constables, is kept at the cost of over a hundred pounds per annum; and if he can say how many towns having a similar population have a head constable in charge.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is considered necessary in the public interests to retain a head constable at Ballynahinch. Head constables are stationed in many other towns similiarly circumstanced in respect to population.

Drill Instructors to Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that there are no recruits now in training at the Royal Irish Constabulary depôt, inquiries will be made as to the necessity for further retaining the staff of drill instructors who hold the temporary rank of acting sergeant, and are occupying positions which might be held by senior constables.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Inspector-General does not consider that the services of the present staff of drill instructors can be dispensed with. The reserve force at the depôt is being augmented by a number of men serving in the country, and the instructors will be employed in putting these men through a course of drill. They will also be required for recruits as soon as recruiting recommences.

South African War—Medal Awards—Case of Gunner Kelly.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Gunner James Kelly, J Battery, R.H.A. (No. 88,614), who in an engagement at Slingersfontein, Cape Colony, in the late South African war, when a section of his battery was surrounded by Boers and Sergeant A. Watson was shot, ran to his aid under a heavy fire, and was subsequently assisted by Sergeant-Major Cox as well as another man; and whether, seeing that Sergeant-Major Cox has been awarded a distinguished service medal for saving Sergeant Watson's life, he will explain why Gunner Kelly has been passed over and no notice taken of his action, and will he be awarded a similar medal to that given to Sergeant-Major Cox.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The name of Gunner James Kelly, J Battery, R.H.A., was not brought to Lord Roberts' notice for gallant conduct. Battery Sergeant-Major Cocks was awarded the distinguished conduct medal for good work and not for any specific act of gallantry. I am afraid, therefore, that I am not in a position to take any further steps in the matter.

Evidence of Commission of Inquiry into Transvaal Mines Department.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will place in the Library of the House copies of the Report and Evidence of the Commission appointed in the Transvaal in the autumn of 1903, at the instance of the Legislative Council, to inquire into the management of the Mines Department by Mr. Wybergh.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have communicated with Lord Milner on the subject of the Question.

Chinese labour in South Africa—Payments to Chinese Government.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say whether any payment will be made to the Chinese Government by an importer of labourers into South Africa, either in the form of payment for licence or capitation grant on each enlisted labourer.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I am not in a position to make any definite statement on this matter pending negotiation, now in progress, with the Colonial Government on the regulations.

Wilby Town Estates, Suffolk.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): To ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner when the last scheme relating to the Wilby Town Estates, Suffolk, was sealed, and whether a copy was sent in due form to each of the persons interested.

(*Answered by Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*) The last scheme was sealed on the 26th

January, 1869, after due notice in compliance with the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts. On the 20th January, 1903, an order under the Board of Education Act, 1899, was sealed determining in accordance with the existing trusts the part of the endowment of the charity which is held for educational purposes. No notice of the proposal to make such an order is required by the Act to be given to persons interested, but the Commissioners, in accordance with their practice in such cases, sent a draft of the order to the trustees of the charity, and a draft was also sent to the parish council of Wilby at the request of the council.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Proposed Royal Naval Reserve Station in Ross-shire.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state when it is proposed to proceed with the establishment of a Royal Naval Reserve Station at Ullapool, Ross-shire.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The establishment of this station is necessarily delayed pending the result of negotiations for a satisfactory site, which are at present in progress.

"Centurion" Gun Sights.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, are the old sights of the "Centurion," which are correct, unfit for use in action because the man using them and firing the gun is 10 feet from the training and elevating gear, and is therefore unable to lay the gun himself; are the new telescopic sights of the ship, intended for use in action, also faulty, in consequence of their defective connection with the gun; did the captain of the "Excellent" refuse to pass all the turret sights, and declare the ship unfit to leave Portsmouth; is he aware that the telescopic sights can only be rectified by bringing the "Centurion" home and fitting new sights; and when do the Admiralty propose to do this.

MR. PRETYMAN: The captain of the "Excellent" does not pass sights, he only makes a report to the Admiralty, with whom the decision rests. The remaining points raised in the Question are dealt with in Lord Selborne's letter to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, published in the Press yesterday.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But did the captain of the "Excellent" report the sights faulty and the ships therefore unfit to leave Portsmouth?

MR. PRETYMAN: The captain of the "Excellent" makes a report generally to the Admiralty on all points. I cannot make public any confidential reports.

Treatment of Sick and Wounded Soldiers.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can submit to the House a statement showing how far the general recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Treatment of the Sick and Wounded during the South African Campaign either have been carried out or are still under consideration with a view to adoption.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): A detailed explanation of all action taken would involve the preparation of a very lengthy report. The following brief statement will, however, I think, sufficiently show what has been done, taking the recommendations of the Commission *seriatim*: (1) The establishment of officers has been increased by 100. The Royal Army Medical Corps has been increased by 400 men. (2) The supply of surgeons and trained orderlies in the event of a great war is now receiving careful consideration. The equipment provided by the Mowatt reserves for three Army Corps, one cavalry division, and line of communication troops will, it is hoped, be quite complete by the middle of 1904. (3) The supply of candidates is now sufficient and the quality most satisfactory. A college has been established in London, through which all captains must pass before promotion. Promotion to the higher ranks will be by selection, and all must attain a high standard of qualification. Acceleration in promotion from captain to major can now be obtained by officers who show special merit at examination. Also special professional attainments will be recognised by appointment to special posts carrying extra pay. (4) The formation of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service provides for a great increase in the establishment of women nurses. (5) Sanitary officers have already been, and are still being, appointed to important commands. (6) A new and improved pattern of ambulance wagon has been adopted. (7) Experiments are now in progress having for their object the provision of a tent of improved pattern and more suitable for sick and wounded.

Weekly Cost of British Forces in South Africa.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the cost per week of the military force now in South Africa.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The total cost of the force now in South Africa may be taken at £80,000 a week.

Accidents in Transvaal Mines.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can give the percentage of accidents and of deaths from accidents, and also the death rate from other causes, among the natives employed on the gold mines in South Africa during the last two years.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The Transvaal Mining Engineer's report for the year ended 30th June, 1903, gives the following figures as to accidents. For year 1901–2 average number of coloured persons employed on gold mines 18,837, number killed sixty-five, number injured 106. For the year 1902–3 average number employed 43,875, number killed 172, number injured 300. The death rate from all causes on the Witwatersrand mines is given at 57·7 per 1,000 per annum, and from sickness alone at 54·5 per 1,000 per annum for the period November, 1902—April, 1903, on page 389 of Cd. 1897.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): Will the right hon. Gentleman say if it is not the fact that the mortality in some districts in the Transvaal is as high as 100 per 1,000, and will he give instructions to Lord Milner that natives brought from tropical districts shall not be employed on the high slopes?

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Does the mortality, among the British Central Africa natives, of 280 per 1,000 still continue?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Will the right hon. Gentleman at his leisure give a return of the industrial mortality of the last two or three years in a Paper similar to that he gave about six weeks ago?

*MR. LYTTELTON: If my hon. friend will move for it I will consider it.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I would prefer to leave that to the hon. Gentleman who moved for the other one.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is the right hon. Gentleman taking any steps himself in regard to this mortality.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! This is becoming a debate. It does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Chinese women and children who accompany indentured Chinese labourers in the Transvaal will be subjected to the same restrictions as to residence and otherwise as those labourers.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I would refer the hon. Member to Clause 33 (1) of the Ordinance in Cd. 1898.

DR. MACNAMARA: May I ask whether the statement in the Question as to the women and children accompanying indentured Chinese labourers is correct. Will they be permitted to accompany the labourers?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I do not quite follow the hon. Member. The Question is whether Chinese women and children who accompany indentured Chinese labourers in the Transvaal will be subjected to the same restrictions as the labourers. That supposes a condition of things in which they do accompany them.

It may also suppose a condition of things in which they may follow them.

Dr. MACNAMARA: My Question is whether the suggestion in the Question that the Chinese women and children may accompany them is correct.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: They may or may not. The Chinese labourer may desire to bring his wife and children with him, or he may desire to see for himself what the conditions are, and bring his wife out afterwards.

Dr. MACNAMARA: Then I will ask whether, if he desires that his wife and children shall accompany him, it will be possible for them to do so.

*Mr. SPEAKER: This does not arise out of the Question.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): Will the women and children be subject to the same rigid restrictions as the labourers themselves.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I have answered that Question once.

Mr. WHITLEY: No——

*Mr. SPEAKER: The Question on the Paper has been answered.

Transvaal Magistracy.

Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been drawn to the utterance of the Chief Justice in the Supreme Court of the Transvaal on 21st October last, as to the want of knowledge shown by magistrates of the elementary principles of law, and the results thereby entailed; and whether he proposes taking any action in the matter.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I am aware that the Chief Justice made observations on some of the magistrates of the nature referred to. I understand that changes are to be made in the method of appointing magistrates, with the object of securing a higher standard of legal knowledge. It must be remembered, however, that in the Transvaal the duties of a magistrate are administrative as well as judicial.

Plague Prevention at Hong-Kong.

* Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has yet received from the Governor of Hong-Kong a report relative to Haffkine's plague prophylactic; and, if so, will he state when the system of inoculation was brought into operation in Hong-Kong, the number of persons inoculated, and how many have succumbed to plague.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: In accordance with the promise given last July, the Governor was asked to embody the information desired in his next general report on plague, and, no report having been received, he has been reminded by telegraph.

Suez Canal Navigation in War Times.

Lord EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if His Majesty's Government still adhere to the opinion that the Convention between the Powers in regard to the Suez Canal, which was signed at Constantinople on the 29th October, 1888, and the ratifications whereof were deposited at Constantinople on the 22nd October, 1888, cannot be brought into practical operation, as was stated by Mr. Curzon on the 12th July, 1898, owing to the reserves made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government by the British delegates at the Suez Canal Commission in Paris, 1885, which were renewed by Lord Salisbury and communicated to the Powers in 1887; and if any communications have taken place between the Powers in regard to these reserves since 1898; and, if the Convention is not operative, if it is to be understood that His Majesty's Government adhere to the opinions embodied in Lord Derby's despatch of 6th May, 1877, written at the time of the Russo-Turkish war, in regard to the principles which regulate the navigation through the Suez Canal in time of war.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): The position has undergone no alteration since the answer was given to which the hon. Member refers. His Majesty's Government adhere to the opinions embodied in Lord Derby's note to the Russian Ambassador of 6th May, 1877, with regard to the principles which should govern the navigation of the Canal in time of war, and consider that the rules laid down in Articles 1 to 6 of the Convention are in accordance with those principles. Regulations designed to give effect to the second paragraph of Article 4 were issued by the Egyptian Government on the 10th instant.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the noble Lord explain how it was that the Government agreed to sign in 1888 a Convention they declared against in advance in 1887?

EARL PERCY: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Shanghai-Nanking Railway.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having regard to the fact that the preliminary agreement for the construction of the Canton - Kowloon Railway was signed on the 28th March, 1898, and that the construction of the line is contingent on arrangements being made for financing the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, will he state the amount required for the construction of the latter line, and when the British and Chinese Corporation expect to be in a position to proceed with the work of construction.

EARL PERCY: I understand that it is estimated that the cost of the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, including the land required, will be £3,250,000. I regret that I am not at present in a position to answer the second part of the hon. Member's Question.

Fiscal Retaliation Abroad.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the promised reports upon the results of retaliation between certain Foreign Powers have been received; and whether there would be any objection to their publication in full.

EARL PERCY: The reports have already been laid. They are printed in full.

Export of China and Ball Clays.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he has considered the advisability of imposing a duty on the export of china and ball clays from this country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Yes, Sir, I looked into this question recently. The export of china and ball clays, though increasing, does not reach half a million tons a year, and the revenue derivable from even a high *ad valorem* export duty would be insignificant. But the course of the export figures shall be watched.

Estate Duty Office.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how many additional officers have been added to the staff of the Estate Duty Office during the present financial year, when were they authorised by the Treasury, when did the new officers commence their duties, and are they still engaged on them; what additional expenditure, if any, has been authorised during the present financial year for the working of this department; have any changes been made in the methods of collecting the Estate Duty, if so, what are those changes, have they been successful, and are they still in operation.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Sixty-one additional officers, thirteen of whom are temporary boy clerks, have been added to the staff of the Estate Duty Office during the present financial year by the authority of the Treasury, dated 21st October, 1903. The new officers, with the exception of ten who have not yet arrived, commenced their duties at various dates in the months of December and January, and are still engaged on them. No additional expenditure, except out of savings which have been affected out of the Vote for the Inland Revenue Department,, has been authorised during the current year for the working of this office. In connection with the assessment of death duties generally, certain changes have recently been made in the distribution of business and in the method of keeping the records of it. It would not be possible to explain these changes within the limits of the answer to a Question, but it may be said that they have been adopted in pursuance of the recommendation of a Committee which sat in 1898-99, and which was presided over by the right hon. Member for Haddingtonshire. The changes only came into operation on 1st January, and it is too soon yet to pass a judgment upon their effect, but there is every reason to expect that they will be successful.

Corn Tax.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government is to re-impose the corn tax of last year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no such intention at present.

Boy Smokers.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the increase in cigarette smoking amongst boys; and whether, in view of the effects of this practice, he will consider the desirability of taking steps to prohibit smoking by boys in Government employment, to invite the co-operation of employers of juvenile labour in putting down the practice, and to call the attention of all school authorities to the matter through the agency of the Board of Education.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have no special information on this subject, nor have I any powers to take action with regard to it. I am disposed to think that the public attention which is, very rightly, being drawn to the question is the most effective influence in the direction desired by the hon. Member. I may point out that there is a Committee on Physical Deterioration now sitting, and I understand that the subject of the hon. Member's Question is among those which they will consider.

Trades Union Law.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Commission appointed to consider the effect of certain legal decisions on the law relating to trades unions has met; how many meetings have yet been held; and, when the Commission may be expected to report.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I can only repeat the answer which I gave on behalf of the First Lord of the Treasury to a similar Question by the hon. Member for the Cleveland Division last Tuesday week,† viz., that the Commission has at present held only private sittings, but will very shortly meet to take evidence, and that it is impossible to say when the Report will be presented. I have nothing to add to this.

Visisection.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that Professor Starling, in giving evidence in the case of Bayliss *v.* Coleridge, stated on the 13th November, 1903, that on the 2nd February, 1903, he performed an operation on a brown dog, and, instead of killing the dog as provided by the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, handed it to Mr. Bayliss for another experiment; and, if so, whether, in view of Section 1 of this Act, he proposes to take any action.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I considered most carefully all the facts of this case both before and at the time of the Action referred to and I came to the conclusion, which I see no reason to vary, that I was not called upon to take action.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that since 1876 no prosecution for vivisection has been instituted?

Brussels Sugar Convention.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the fact that the Permanent Commission established under the Brussels Sugar Convention has decided that the limitation of the surtax laid down in Article III. of the Convention does not apply to sugared products, any effort is being made by the Government to alter this decision or to make arrangements with the individual co-signatory Powers to secure a reduction of their tariffs in favour of British-made sugared products.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix, 733.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Questions affecting the position of sugared products will be considered at the next meeting of the Permanent Commission in March, and pending the result of that discussion, I think it would be inexpedient to make any statement on the subject.

Statistics of Unemployed Labour.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether information regarding the number of unemployed in foreign countries as compared with the number in Great Britain could be obtained for the instruction of this House; and whether he could furnish returns showing the comparative frequency and comparative severity of fluctuations in the demand for skilled and unskilled labour in protectionist and free-trade countries.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is quite impossible to obtain statistics regarding the number of unemployed in foreign countries on a basis which would enable sound comparisons to be made with the figures for this country published by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade. I hope, however, to lay on the Table of the House a Return embodying such information as is available with regard to fluctuations of employment both in this and other countries.

Postal Distribution of Lottery Circulars.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the Post Office is being employed, even more largely than formerly, as a means of distributing gambling lottery circulars setting out advantages and offering inducements to purchase lottery tickets; and whether he is willing to issue instructions that all batches of sealed circulars coming from persons whose address in this country is not printed on the outside of the envelope, shall not be received for pre-payment of postage until precautions have been adopted, by opening some of them, to ascertain that they do not contain improper solicitations to gamble. And may I further ask whether, in the event of his being unable to adopt the suggestion embodied in my Question, the noble Lord will consider the possibility of adopting other means.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Weshtoughton): I am unable to say whether the Post Office is more largely used than formerly for the purpose of distributing lottery circulars. Many such circulars are doubtless posted in bulk at post offices in this country, but there is nothing on the covers to indicate their nature, and I have no power to open closed letters. I may point out, moreover, that even if the action suggested by the hon. Member could be taken it would not prevent lottery circulars from being sent through the post, seeing that the senders would no doubt cease to post the packets in bulk, and would simply affix stamps and post them in the ordinary way. With regard to the further Question of my hon. friend I have to say that if I could find any method by which I could stop these lottery and betting circulars, nothing would give me greater pleasure.

Caersws Postal Arrangements.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is now able to give a favourable answer to the application of the Parish Council of Llanwnog, Montgomeryshire, for a morning despatch of letters from the village of Caersws in that parish.

LORD STANLEY: I regret that, in view of the high cost of the present service as compared with the amount of correspondence, I should not be justified in sanctioning the additional expense which would attend the establishment of the morning despatch of letters asked for.

Illegal Trawling off the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the light keepers at Tiumpan Head, Island of Lewis, recorded any cases of illegal trawling in Broad Bay during the past year; and, if so, will he state the number, and in how many cases prosecutions have taken place.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): Perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to answer.

There have been during the last year three cases of illegal trawling observed by the lighthouse keepers of Tiumpan Head, all of these cases have been prosecuted, two of which have led to convictions and in the third, which was also reported by the Coastguard, the trial has not as yet taken place.

Artificial Manures in Ireland.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Huntingtonshire, as representing the Board of Agriculture, whether any amendment will be made or is in contemplation in the Fertilizers and Feeding Stuffs Act of 1893, to insure that purchases of artificial manures in Ireland are of the quality represented to them; whether he is aware that owing to the absence of analysis or other certified guarantee, nitrogen is frequently put down as ammonia or sulphate of ammonia, whereas one part of nitrogen equals 4·7 parts of sulphate of ammonia; that equally fraudulent statements are made regarding potash, potash salts, and phosphates, to the detriment of the purchaser; and whether, with a view to preventing fraud on the purchaser, the analysis of each bag sold will in future be ordered to be stamped or printed on each bag; that the police or other inspector empowered by the county council shall be authorised to take samples in the usual way for submission to the county analyst; and that, as regards feeding stuffs, merchants will be obliged to give the exact analytical composition of these goods, failure to stand analytical test subsequently to be constituted an offence punishable in a court of summary jurisdiction, or can he hold out any hope of amendment of the law in these directions.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): At my hon. friend's request I will reply to this Question. The question of amending the Act in so far as it applies to Ireland is now under consideration, and the suggestions of the hon. Member will not be lost sight of.

MR. FFRENCH asked if there was any objection to having analyses made of artificial manures in Ireland as required by Act of Parliament in England?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have said that the whole matter is under consideration, and the hon. Member's suggestion will not be lost sight of.

Ennistymon Guardians and the Police.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Ennistymon guardians in which it is asked by what authority Sergeants Coyne, Brennan, and Breden, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, questioned members of the clothing committee as to their reasons for rejecting clothing supplied by a contractor to the workhouse; and whether he will say by what authority the police acted in this matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: My attention has been directed to the resolution in question. I am inquiring into the matter.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I will repeat the Question this day week.

Iveagh-Pirrie Motor-car Service.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will take care that in any arrangements under the Iveagh-Pirrie motor-car service scheme consideration will be paid to the advisability of connecting Ballyvaughan with Oranmore, and Ballyvaughan with Lisdoonvarna and other districts in the county Clare, where the means of communication are at present inconvenient and unfavourable to local industry.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, I will see that these proposals are considered. They are not, however, comprised among the schemes to be initiated in the first instance.

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Shillelagh Extension Act.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. John Henry Ryan, C.E., Dublin, was appointed by the Commissioners of Public Works as arbitrator under the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Shillelagh Extension Act; that, under the Act passed in 1897, the time for acquiring land compulsorily was limited to a period of five years; and that repeated sittings have been held with expense to the parties; and whether he will state what is the cause of the delay in the publication of the final award.

MR. WYNDHAM: Mr. Ryan was appointed arbitrator in July, 1900. The railway company did not intimate to him their desire to proceed with his inquiries until November, 1902. A draft sectional award was lodged by the arbitrator in June, 1903, and the final award was lodged yesterday. The delay has been caused by the necessity of recasting claims; by repeated adjournments to meet the convenience of the parties, and by the complicated nature of the case.

Granard Union—Surcharges on Guardians.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any application has been made to the Local Government Board to remit a surcharge of £4 11s. on three rural district councillors of Granard Union has been received; and, if so, whether, having regard to the fact that this money was paid *boná fide* by the guardians in the same way in which they had paid similar sums for many years, he will recommend the Board to remit the surcharge.

MR. WYNDHAM: The application is under consideration. A decision cannot be taken until further information, which has been called for, is before the Board.

Land Purchase in County Longford—John Kenny's Holding.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will direct the attention of the Estate Commissioners to the case of John Kenny, Glannagh, county Longford, whose immediate landlord is willing to sell to him but cannot do so in consequence of the attitude of the head landlord; and whether he will direct the Estate Commissioners to purchase the entire holding, both of the middle landlord and tenant, with a view to resale to the latter.

MR. WYNDHAM: No application has been made to the Commissioners on behalf of John Kenny, or of the middleman or head landlord. In the absence of all information as to the nature of the interests of the immediate landlord and head landlord it is impossible to say which course is proper to be adopted.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the matter be considered by the Estates Commissioners?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, when the conditions have been fulfilled. There is some technical point involved.

Mrs McGibney's Farm.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of Mrs. McGibney, Ballinacross, Granard, whose evicted farm has been taken by the sub-sheriff of county Longford; and, if so, will he explain under what authority the sub-sheriff, in the execution of his duty, bought in this farm and deprived the evicted tenant of it, and direct the attention of the Estate Commissioners to this case with a view to arranging through them for a resale to the evicted tenant.

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand that this holding was let in the ordinary way to Mr. Robinson, who is sub-sheriff, but that he did not use his powers to obtain possession. Mrs. McGibney and her son are both dead; her daughter survives. In the absence of information as to whether the landlord proposes to sell the estate on which the evicted holding is situate, it is not possible to say whether the Commissioners have power to deal with the matter. If an application be made to them it will, of course, be considered.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Have you no power to restrain the sub-sheriff from taking possession?

[No answer was returned.]

Arklow Pier and Harbour.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Arklow Pier and Harbour was constructed by the Board of Public Works, that the people of Arklow and adjoining baronies guaranteed the repayment of the cost of its construction, that from an engineering point of view it shortly afterwards proved to be unsuited to its original purpose, and that for many months past navigation has been impossible, imposing loss and suffering upon the fishing population and threatening the chief industries of the town and district with extinction; and whether, seeing that the Board's engineer insisted on building the harbour on its present plan in opposition to the advice and warning of the people of Arklow, and that the Harbour Board and other local bodies have for years been calling upon the Government to remedy the existing state of things, he will now take the necessary steps to put an end to them and safeguard public interests in this harbour.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The existing harbour was constructed by the Board of Works to replace one previously built by local effort, and which was destroyed by the sea in 1877. The cost was defrayed by loans amounting to £23,500, and by free Government grants amounting to £18,500. The plan of the harbour works was favourably reported on by two independent engineers, a copy of whose report was presented to Parliament in 1886. The works were successful in keeping the harbour practically clear of sand from 1887, the date of their completion, until last year, when, as a result of heavy gales, a sand bar was formed at the entrance to the harbour. An engineer of the Board of Works has recently surveyed the harbour, and his report is about to be communicated to the Harbour Commissioners.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Is the statement correct that this harbour was built on a plan opposed by the local people, who, now it has gone wrong, are told they must remedy it?

Mr. WYNDHAM: Until I have the report I can express no opinion.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: It is a very bad case. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will do something.

Dublin Police Commissioner and the University Commission.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain under what circumstances the present Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police was permitted to give evidence before the recent University Commission in support of a Roman Catholic University for Ireland, and if such action is in accordance with the police regulations.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Sir John Ross, of Bladensburg, is a member of the Senate of the Royal University of Ireland, and it was in this capacity he gave evidence before the Royal Commission. He was not prohibited by the police regulations from appearing as a witness before the Royal Commission.

Irish Development Grant.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will make any statement of his intentions as to the purposes for which the Irish Development Grant Fund is to be used before the Estimate for that purpose is presented; and whether he intends to consult the views of Irish representatives upon the subject.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I should be glad to consult the views of the Irish Members, both on the total amount with which it may be prudent to charge the Development Grant during the ensuing financial year, and on the allocation of the grant within the limits which prudence may suggest.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman make some statement before the Estimate is actually drawn up?

Mr. WYNDHAM: It is rather hard on me to ask for a promise of that kind. I will see what can be done.

Irish Equivalent Grant.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many district, urban, and county councils in Ireland have passed resolutions demanding that the equivalent grant be devoted in Ireland, as in England, to primary education.

MR. WYNDHAM: Resolutions have been received at the Castle from eight county councils, twelve urban and thirty-two rural district councils.

Irish National School Assistant Teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the promise made last year, that the average required for the service of an assistant teacher in an Irish National School would be reduced from sixty to fifty, has been carried out.

MR. WYNDHAM: I replied to a similar Question on the subject yesterday,† put by the hon. Member for North Cork.

Land Purchase in Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many estates have been sold in Kerry under the Land Act of 1903, how many tenants are affected, what is the total price paid.

MR. WYNDHAM: Applications have been filed in the Estates Commissioners' Office for sales by the landlord to the tenants direct, in the cases of three estates. The total purchase money is £11,960. Application has also been made to the Commissioners to purchase an estate, with 173 tenants under Section 6 of the Act.

MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the names of the landlords in these three cases?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have not that information.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E): Will the right hon. Gentleman say if the money mentioned by him includes the purchase money of the evicted farms at Cragg, county Kerry, by the Congested Districts Board, about which an undertaking was given to me by the Board that nothing further should be done in the matter until the right hon. Gentleman saw me.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am in communication with the Under-Secretary as to the case, and when I hear from him I will communicate with the hon. Member.

MR. MURPHY expressed a hope that the delay would not impair the position of the evicted tenants. A promise was given me before the opening of Parliament——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! We cannot go into that now. The right hon. Gentleman has promised to communicate with the hon. Member.

Land Purchase in Galway.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the correspondence which has taken place between M. G. Comyn Kenny and Rev. Thomas Bowes, Laurencetown, county Galway, relative to the division and sale of the grass farm (Kill) of 300 acres I.P.M., wherein Mr. Kenny states he has been in communication with the Estates Commissioners, who refuse to be furnished with a map showing the proposed holdings, with the names and description of the proposed tenants; is he aware that posters or circulars have been distributed in the district stating that Mr. Kenny will mark out the bounds as far as possible to suit the requirements of the people; that the proposal is to let the divisions in 25-acre lots at 30s. per acre rent, a fine of £150 to be paid on entering into possession, the tenanted holdings to be then sold under the Purchase Act of last year; and if he will say whether the Estates Commissioners are recommending the landlords generally to adopt such arrangements for the division and sale of grass farms; and whether they have sanctioned Mr. Kenny's action.

MR. WYNDHAM: There has been no correspondence between Dr. Kenny and the Commissioners in this matter. I am informed, however, that he had an interview with one of the Commissioners, who suggested to him that if he submitted a map and details of the proposed division of the land they would be considered. He has not yet done so. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the matters alluded to in the placard, beyond what is alleged in the Question.

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† See page 19.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.) asked as to a letter stating that the Estates Commissioners had power to advance money at 3¼ per cent. for the purpose of building dwelling-houses and making other improvements on the land.

Mr. WYNDHAM protested that he could not be expected to conduct the business of the Estates Commissioners Office by means of Question and answer across the floor of the House. He suggested some discrepancy had arisen by reason of the use of certain words.

Presidents of the Queen's Colleges.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the salaries of the Presidents of the Queen's Colleges in Cork, Galway, and Belfast, respectively; what are the duties of these gentlemen; whether their positions involve residence in these cities; and whether, as a matter of fact, they reside during all or a portion of the year at the places named, and, if only a portion of the year, whether he will state the period of residence each year.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The salary (£800) and the duties of the President of each of these colleges, are prescribed by the College Charters, a copy of which I have forwarded to the hon. Member. There is no express statutory requirement in respect to residence on the part of the President, who is responsible for the general conduct of affairs in the college. I have no information on the last part of the Question, but will endeavour to obtain it.

Lower Bann River.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps have been taken since last session, or are proposed to be taken during the present session, with a view to transferring the control of the Lower Bann River, county Down, from the Coleraine district to the Dundalk district.

Mr. WYNDHAM: There is no proposal before the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction to transfer the control of the Lower Bann to the Dundalk Board of Conservators of Fisheries. I am inquiring whether such a transfer could be effected in the absence of legislation such as was introduced by me in 1902, and will communicate further with the hon. Member on the subject.

Castle of Ardandra, County Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will direct an inquiry to be made into the present condition of the ruins of the ancient Castle of Ardandra, county Longford, with a view to their restoration and protection.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): No such castle is known to the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland. If the hon. Member will indicate the locality more precisely I shall be glad to have inquiry made.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Can the Home Secretary state what will be the course of business next week?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Assuming the debate on the Address to be concluded this evening, as I hope, it is proposed on Monday to take the Army, on Tuesday the Navy, and on Wednesday the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL.

Ordered, "That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Electric Lighting (London) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

NEW BILLS.

HOUSE-LETTING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To deal with the system of House-letting in the boroughs of Scotland," presented by Mr. Alexander Cross; supported by Mr. T. W. Russell and Sir John Leng; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 79.]

JURORS EXPENSES BILL.

"To provide for the Payment of the Expenses of Jurors attending assizes and quarter sessions," presented by Mr. Lloyd-Morgan; supported by Mr. Wharton, Mr. Abel Thomas, and Mr. John Hutton; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 77.]

MORTGAGE OF PREMISES BILL.

"To amend the Law in regard to the Mortgaging of Premises containing Trade Machinery," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 78.]

CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

"To provide for the better regulation of Canal Traffic," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Sir John Brunner, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Field, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. J. H. Whitley, and Mr. Wolff; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 79.]

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.

"To provide for the registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange, and to allow summary judgment thereon," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 80.]

PROVISIONAL ORDER (MARRIAGES) BILL.

"To enable Provisional Orders to be made for removing any invalidity or doubt attaching to marriages by reason of some informality," presented by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 81.]

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

"To amend the Police Act, 1890, with respect to the Pensions of Constables who continue to serve after they have become entitled to a Pension," presented by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 82.]

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Rating of Hereditaments containing Machinery," presented by Mr. Chapman; supported by Sir Edward Strachey, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Cawley, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Emmott, and Colonel Royds; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 83.]

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To admit to the School Board Electorate of Scotland persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. John Dewar, Mr Bignold, Mr. Harmsworth, and Mr. Caldwell; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 15th March, and to be printed. [Bill 84.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Bignold, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. Caldwell; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 15th March, and to be printed. [Bill 85.]

PENAL SERVITUDE BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Penal Servitude in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 86.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[THIRTEENTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

Amendment proposed—

Mr. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.) first expressed his regret that the task of moving the Amendment had not fallen to the lot of some Member more accustomed to take part in the proceedings of the House, and more competent to deal with the complex matters with which the Amendment was concerned, but he found consolation in the fact that any defect on his part in the discharge of his duty would be fully compensated for by those who would follow him. He was aware that the subject matter of the Amendment was not one which appealed to the majority of Members, many of whom considered that the raising of the question at this moment was inopportune and unnecessary. But if the House should feel aggrieved at their raising the question at the present time, he could only point out that the fault did not lie with them. They were there against their will, and the Chief Secretary had told them that they were there on a footing of political equality, having equal claims with other Parties on the time of the House. They might differ from the Chief Secretary in regard to the equality of their position, but one thing was certain, and that was that, as long as they were there, they would avail themselves of every opportunity on which they could seize in order to claim redress for the grievances under which those whom they represented were suffering. They believed it to be their duty, so far as they could to take advantage of the position in which they found themselves, and accordingly they brought forward their Amendment that day, seeing that it involved matters of the most vital and pressing importance to their constituents.

The Chief Secretary, in a speech which he delivered on the 3rd February in reply to the hon. Member for Waterford, said that while he would introduce a Bill amending the Land Purchase Act of last session he would not re-open the Irish land question. That was not an accurate way of describing the situation. They did not ask the right hon. Gentleman to re-open the Irish Land Question, but the purpose of their Amendment was to show the House and the Chief Secretary that he had never closed it. It had been found that the language of the Land Purchase Act of last year was ambiguous with regard to the payment of the bonus, and when the Chief Secretary referred to that matter he was chivalrous enough to take upon himself the sole responsibility for the defective phraseology of the Bill. They, however, knew where the responsibility rested. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I am honourably bound to see that the intention of Parliament is carried out in regard to the bonus."

This was an important statement, for if the right hon. Gentleman was honourably bound to carry out the intentions of Parliament with regard to the payment of the bonus to the limited or other owners in Ireland, he was also honourably bound to carry out the intentions of Parliament in regard to matters of infinitely greater importance. The intention of Parliament was not limited to the granting of huge gifts to limited or to absolute owners, or indeed to any class of owner in Ireland. It was extended to the questions of fair price, of congestion, and of the evicted tenants. In regard to these matters he and his colleagues said that the intentions of Parliament had not been, and could not be, carried out under the Act as it stood, and that the Act must be amended on the lines indicated in the Amendment he was proposing. He would like to say, for himself, that he did not personally approach the discussion of this question in any contentious spirit; he did not approach it in any spirit of mere fault-finding. No one would have been better pleased than he if the realisation of the hopes engendered under auspicious circumstances last year had made the present discussion unnecessary. He had no desire to minimise the praise of, or in the slightest degree detract from, the reputation of the Chief Secretary for his conduct in charge of the Bill of last year, but they believed that the praise would be increased and his reputation would be enhanced, if by the acceptance of their proposal the right hon. Gentleman gave effect to the intentions of Parliament. Those intentions, in passing the Bill last year, were directed to three objects—first, to bring about a transfer of the ownership of the land from the owner to the occupier; secondly, to provide a settlement for the evicted tenants; and, thirdly, to cure congestion. Vast sums of money were placed at the disposal of the Irish Government to enable them to give effect to the intentions of Parliament, and he asserted that the Irish Government was honourably bound to use that money in giving effect to those intentions, and if the action of the Irish landlord party rendered it impossible to give effect to them, the money should, as far as possible, be withheld.

As the House was aware, there were two land questions in Ireland—there was the general land question, and there was the question of congestion. It would be observed that his Amendment was divided into two portions—one dealing with land purchase in general, and the second with congestion. In the first place they said that serious amendment, including the abolition of the zones system, would be required in the Irish Land Act of last session to prevent the unjust inflation of the price of land in Ireland. They said that under the zones system, and as a consequence of that system, the price of land had been rushed up to a fictitious standard, and that the artificial inflation of that price threatened to render the Act inoperative, and consequently to defeat the intentions of Parliament. The intention of Parliament was that the sales should take place at the fair market value, at a price which would not place an undue burden on the purchaser, or subject the taxpayer to undue risks. In a recent speech the Chief Secretary had expressed satisfaction at the way in which the Act was being put into operation, but had urged that—

> "It would be madness on the part of the Commissioners to attempt to raise money at a rapid pace."

The danger lay not in the pace but in the price. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated that the financial clauses were the foundation of the Act, and that any minor defects in the edifice erected on that foundation could be corrected in due course. In the opinion of the Irish Party, the system of zones constituted, not a minor, but a serious defect, striking directly at the financial foundation of the Act. It weakened the security, and consequently the whole foundation. The sole excuse for the invention of the zones system was that it would accelerate the pace, therefore the abolition of the zones would carry out the Chief Secretary's suggestion that the pace should be retarded. Prices had been unjustly inflated, and the zones system had contributed to the result. The average price of land from 1886 to 1903 was seventeen-and-a-half years purchase, but since the passing of the new Act it had been increased by five or six years. On 9th February last he asked the Chief Secretary to state in terms of years purchase the price agreed upon by the 3,070 occupiers who had arranged to purchase under the Act, but the right hon. Gentleman refused the information on the ground that it would entail so much trouble, and deprecated the practice of calling for voluminous interim returns. That was not an answer; it was a lecture, and Irish Members did not come to this House to be lectured by right hon. Gentlemen who undertook to govern Ireland without the consent of the people of Ireland. The Question was repeated in another form, in which merely the average price was asked for, and again the information was refused. The figure was of vital importance in the present discussion, and ought to have been given to the House. Moreover, the information was not asked for on behalf of the Irish Party alone, it was required for the English taxpayer. He quite understood the difficulties of the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman was not the Governor of Ireland. Ireland was governed not through this House, or the King's Ministers, but by a handful of Irish landlords, and it would be extremely inconvenient to them if the figures asked for were given.

Of late years the value of land in Ireland had been going down, as was shown by the fact that the prices of the whole of the agricultural produce of Ireland had decreased from £34,406,856 in 1901 to £34,035,060 in 1902, and the total value of live-stock had fallen from £71,000,000 in 1902 to £69,000,000 in 1903. These totals showed a serious falling off, and he was justified in deducing from them that the value of land had decreased. The same conclusion was to be drawn from the fixing of judicial rents. The reduction of second-term rents in November, December, and January last averaged 16·2 per cent., and the only reason why the Courts would reduce the rents was that the value of the land had decreased. In 1901 the average price of land was eighteen years purchase. Now, with the bonus, the average ranged from twenty-two to twenty-five years. While the value of the land was going down the price extorted by the landlords was going up, and this unnatural condition of price was dangerous to the purchaser, to the Irish ratepayer, to the British Exchequer, and to the financial foundation of the Chief Secretary's Land Bill. This unnatural condition of affairs was due to the intervention of the zones system. By the abolition of inspection, which was the necessary consequence of the zones system, they had given the landlords a free hand. The zones system had encouraged the landlords to demand and extort unfair prices. Under the system of sale and purchase in force from 1886 to 1903 there was no such thing as a zones system, but there was a system of inspection, and the procedure was that, when the landlord and tenant agreed to a price, the Land Commission sent down an inspector, and if he found that the land gave sufficient security for the advance claimed, then the advance was made. So that the inspection was a safeguard to the tenant, the taxpayer, and to the financial foundation of the Land Acts. No advance used to be made until the inspector had certified, and that safeguard did not exist under the Land Act of last session. No matter how unfair the price or rotten the security, if the landlords and tenants agreed upon a price within the zones then the Estates Commissioners had no option but to make the advance. These inspectors were not acting on behalf of the tenants, and they had no bias towards the tenant, but rather the other way, and yet under the Land Acts of 1885 and 1888 they refused 3,795 applications. He was quoting from the Report of the Land Commission. Of the total number of applications received, which was 29,496, 3,795, representing £1,448,445, were refused on the ground of insufficient security, irregularity, defective title, etc. When those applications were refused the average price of land was seventeen years purchase. Under the Acts of 1891 and 1896, 2,646 were refused, representing £870,105. The British taxpayer should remember, when these advances were refused, mostly on account of insufficient security, the average price of land in Ireland was seventeen years purchase, and now under the zones system, and without inspection, advances were made, although the average price of land was twenty-five years purchase. There was no security for the solvency of the purchaser or the financial foundation of the Bill. A landlord in his constituency offered a few years ago to sell his estate, at eighteen years purchase, to his tenants and this was agreed upon both by the tenants and the landlord. An application was made to the Land Commission for an advance. The inspector was sent down, and he reported that the estate in question was not sufficient security for the eighteen years purchase, which included the interest of the tenant. He reported that eighteen years was too much. Those same tenants recently asked their landlord if he would sell under the Land Act of last year, and he replied that he would not sell to the tenants for less than twenty-five years purchase. Therefore they had the Land Commission officially declaring that the land was not worth eighteen years purchase whilst the Estates Commissioners sitting next door would be bound to advance twenty-five years purchase if the tenants agreed to purchase. Parliament never contemplated that under the Act of last year prices would be forced up in such an unnatural and arbitrary way. He believed that the intention of Parliament was that the £12,000,000 bonus given by this House to the Irish landlords would enable them to sell at lower prices than those which prevailed under previous Acts. The prices at present demanded by the landlords appeared to them to be so extravagant that they thought an addition to these prices of £12,000,000 was a great waste of public money. If tenants were ready to pay such prices as were now demanded there would have been no need for the Land Act of last year, for the sales could have been carried out under 1895 and 1896 machinery. While these exorbitant demands were being made the tenants had never sought to reduce the prices paid before the passing of the Act. They had surrendered to the landlords (1) the bonus; (2) the payment of costs; (3) the payment in cash; (4) facilities for purchasing demesnes; and (5) the advantages resulting from the clearing off of mortgages. All these rights the tenants had voluntarily surrendered to the landlords. No one expected that after receiving all those advantages the landlords would have insisted upon demanding prices far in excess of thos epaid from 1886 to 1902.

His proposal was that under the new Act, as under the old, no advance should be made without inspection. When the average price was seventeen-and-a-half years purchase there were many failures, but there must now be much greater probability of failure when land had advanced to twenty-four or twenty-five years purchase. Under the old system the greater the amount of arrears the greater the care taken by the inspector to inquire into the security, but under the new Act the landlords had absolutely a free hand. They had no inspection to fear, and the larger the arrears the more helpless the tenant was in the hands of the landlord. The landlords were playing on the necessities of the poorest class of tenant and were exacting terms out of all proportion to the demands of justice. If the tenants failed, as in his judgment they were bound to fail if they accepted such terms, the taxpayer would be liable. The Chief Secretary said that he considered the financial foundation of the Land Act as the most important part of the measure and if the right hon. Gentleman were anxious to keep that foundation safe and solid it would be necessary for him to abolish the zones system and to restore inspection.

The second part of the Amendment dealt with the question of congestion. He maintained that the Act fo last year did not provide any remedy for the evils of congestion nor did it contain any provision sufficient to secure the redistribution of land in the poorer parts of the country. Unless such a provision were inserted the Irish Land question could not be settled. He and his hon. friends proposed that the power of compulsory purchase should be conferred on the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners with the additional provision, that the sales of the congested estates should only be made to the Congested Districts Board or to the Estates Commissioners. In their judgment the land question of Ireland existed in its most intense form in the province of Connaught. It was in that province that the land agitation commenced and he maintained that the Act of last year did practically nothing to remedy the evils of which they had often complained in this House. The Government had always admitted the existence of those evils; they also admitted that there was a remedy ready to their hand but they had not the courage to apply it. It was stated last year by the Prime Minister that the Irish Land Laws reflected the utmost discredit on the power of British statesmanship. If that statement were true in regard to Irish land legislation in general it was especially true with regard to the problem of congestion in the west of Ireland. He would only quote a few brief figures which he considered were relevant. In 1841 the population of Connaught was 1,418,851. Then came the famine and the clearances, and afterwards followed consequences which remained to the present day. One of those consequences was that in 1901 the population of Connaught had dwindled to 646,932 or considerably less than half what it was sixty years ago. Another consequence was that from 1851 to 1901 617,255 persons, a number almost equal to the present population, emigrated from Connaught. That was an extraordinary fall in population at a time when the population of other parts of the United Kingdom was increasing by leaps and bounds. It was due, as the appalling exodus of the people was also due, to the land system, which was described by the Prime Minister as the worst in the world. It was also due to the negligence of the Government under a system which the Chief Secretary said conferred on Ireland political equality. In Connaught there were 41,439 holdings which were valued for rating purposes at £4 or under, and 41,851 holdings which were valued at from £4 to £10. That was to say that there were in Connaught 83,290 uneconomic holdings. It was admitted by all Parties that it was practically impossible to obtain subsistence from the land for those poor people who had to live on patches of bog, on morasses, or on mountain sides. They could not earn the rent from the land; they earned it in England and Scotland as agricultural labourers, and in many cases it was paid by remittances from America. Side by side with those small wretched holdings there were large grazing ranches from which the forefathers of those poor people had been evicted, and which at the present time were used, not for the purpose of supporting an industrial agricultural population in comfort and in abundance, but for the purpose of raising cattle and sheep for the English market. It was said some time ago by the Archbishop of Tuam that there was one cure, and one only, for congestion in the west of Ireland, and that was to plant the people on the prairies of the West, and his Grace referred to the land as being at the present moment as free from contact with agriculture as it was when men hunted the boar and the wild deer in primeval days.

The Land Conference Report, in one of its resolutions, said that the congested districts in the west of Ireland should have special treatment accorded to them in the Land Bill. He would give a few figures to show what was the meaning of the redistribution of the land which he advocated. He might add that the figures were taken from documents belonging to the Congested Districts Board, which he was permitted by courtesy to inspect. In the Swinford Union 4,768 families occupied holdings valued at £4 or under and in that union there were thirty-nine graziers and fourteen landlords who occupied grazing land to the value of £3,842. In Westport Union the total number of occupiers was 5,332, and of that number 3,041 occupied holdings of the value of £4 or under, and 150,935 acres of prime land were used for grazing purposes. In Killala Union 909 families occupied holdings valued at £4 or under, whereas seventeen graziers held land valued at £3,034. In Ballinrobe there were 4,081 residential holdings, of which 3,443 were valued at £4 or under, and 149 families occupied holdings of less than one acre. Forty-seven landlords and thirty-five graziers occupied between them 61,031 acres for grazing purposes, and of the landlords thirty-four were absentees, and of the graziers sixteen were non-resident. In Belmullet there were 2,297 holdings, and of these 1,862 were valued at £4 or under, whereas twenty-two graziers occupied land valued at £1,233. In Castlebar there were 6,262 holdings, of which 4,314 were valued at £4 or under, while seventy-two graziers and thirty-five landlords occupied 28,976 acres valued at £13,118. In the Tuam Union there were 3,680 holdings, while there was grazing land amounting to 76,525 acres valued at £29,384. In Ballina the total number of holdings was 5,201, and of these 2,244 were valued at £4 or under, while grazing land in the union was rated at £9,509. The right hon. Gentleman had been through the congested districts and had, when introducing the Land Act of last year, given the House his experience of them. He then said—

> "We want to get at the occupier of the soil to enable him to purchase an economic holding upon which a man and his family can maintain themselves. Well it is difficult in the worst parts of Ireland, perhaps I ought not to dwell on the worst parts of Ireland, but in the worst parts of Ireland, there is a state of affairs which no hon. Member who has not been through them can conceive for a moment to be possible. The tenants are living under conditions which you would not find among the Kaffirs in South Africa."

That was the picture held up before the gaze of the House on the 25th March, and it excited pity and stimulated benevolence. The House said almost as one man—"Let us change the picture and take away this reproach and let there be peace, prosperity, and sunshine in Ireland." The House was asked to lend the credit of the British taxpayer for a loan of £100,000,000, and to make a free grant of £12,000,000 to settle the congested district question. He asserted that that money was given mainly to change the picture painted by the Chief Secretary, and that it would not have been given if the House had believed that after the passing of the Act the picture would have remained unchanged. The picture was unchanged now; the reality was the same to-day, as squalid and as appalling as it was on the 25th of March last. The Kaffir of the congested districts had not been touched by the Act of last year and could not be touched. In his regard the intention of Parliament had come to naught, and they were therefore entitled to ask was not this a case in which the honour of the Chief Secretary was as much concerned as it was, by his own admission, in the case of the bonus to the landowners. It was in the hope that his efforts would change the picture that the House agreed to his financial proposals. They asked him now to give effect to the intentions of the House. They made no apology for pressing this matter on the House, because in their opinion the Act of last year was incapable of giving effect to the intentions of the House. On the Second Reading of the Act the hon. and learned Member for Waterford pointed out that the provisions of the Bill dealing with the congested districts would, if they were not strengthened, prove absolutely insufficient, and that warning was repeated in Committee, but in spite of all warnings the Bill left the House in practically the same condition as it was introduced. Neither in the framing of the Act nor in the discussions in Committee did the congested districts get fair play, and in support of that contention he referred to the resolution of the Land Conference which stated—

> "That the congested districts would require separate and exceptional treatment with a view to the better distribution of the population, and of the land as well as for the acceleration and extension of those projects of migration and enlargement of holding, which the Congested Districts Board, as at present constituted, with its limited powers, had hitherto found it impossible to carry out upon an adequate scale."

The separate and exceptional treatment which, so far as it could be given, was given to the Congested Districts Board by the right hon. Gentleman was not worthy of the name, and did not increase their powers in the slightest degree. The Chief Secretary was in favour of compulsion, as was also Lord Crewe, who said he "hoped the pace would be considerably quickened." He went further and said the framers of the Act made no secret of the fact that they had not seriously attempted to grapple with this urgent problem. Lord Dunraven in the House of Lords said—

> "I take it that the sections applying to the Congested Districts Board are more or less experimental; that is to say, that, if they do not succeed in the object the Government aim at, further legislation on that subject may become necessary."

They were saying that to-day. At a meeting of the Bishops of the province of Connaught this resolution was passed—

> "We desire to record our conviction that the proposals, outlined in the Bill, for dealing with the great question of congestion, and the cultivation of vast tracts of prairie land in the West of Ireland, are quite inadequate. Larger and more extensive powers should be conferred on the Congested Districts Board throughout the entire province similar to the powers granted to the Crofters' Commission, in Scotland."

and then they said—

> "We feel it our duty to declare that, if the Government will not take these or similar measures to deal with this great question in a thorough-going sort of way, the land question will not be settled in the West, nor the tide of emigration be checked; nor can peace and contentment be restored until the grazing lands taken from the people in the past, be given back to the men who are able and willing to work them for the maintenance of themselves and their families."

That resolution was adopted on the 6th of April at Tuam, and signed by the Archbishop of Tuam, and the Bishops of Galway, Achonry, Killala, and Elphin. There was no body of men in Ireland more competent to express an opinion on a matter of this kind than the Bishops of Connaught. They lived among the people, and they were not politicians. The Chief Secretary had not introduced a word into his defective Bill to give effect to the resolution of the Bishops. In Committee on the Bill the congested districts did not get fair play, seeing that the provisions dealing with congestion did not come forward in this House until 7th July, though the Bill was introduced on 25th March. Even at that advanced stage of the session he believed, if the Irish Government had been serious in their intention to grapple with this problem, they might have inserted provisions of a satisfactory nature, but no attention whatever was paid to the representations on the subject which were made from the Nationalist Benches. The Irish Party asked that compulsory powers should be given to acquire suitable land for the people living in the congested districts. They did not ask that these compulsory powers should extend to the whole of Ireland, but they asked for that kind of compulsion which the Prime Minister considered would be necessary in 1890. They asked for that kind of compulsion which the Congested Districts Board considered necessary in 1895. They did not ask for compulsion that would injure either landlord or grazier. The Irish Party never expected that grazing farms in the West of Ireland would be confiscated. They expected that, if compulsion were applied, every interest would be safeguarded. Compulsion was anathema to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It appeared as if the right hon. Gentleman were in the House for the purposes of protecting the interest of the graziers. He said they were an economic necessity. None of those on the Nationalist Benches would agree with him in that matter. Pre-emption was asked and refused; a reorganisation of the Congested Districts Board was also refused; a new and improved definition of "estate" was refused; a new system of scheduling was refused, although the Chief Secretary admitted that the system in existence was arbitrary and fallacious. He was satisfied to leave it arbitrary and fallacious, and it remained so at the present day. When pressed for Amendments the right hon. Gentleman declared that, as the credit and capital of the Congested Districts Board were increased under the Act, they should wait to see what would be done in the autumn and winter under the improved conditions. He did not seek to judge the Act by what had been done under it in the short period that had elapsed since it was passed. He took different ground altogether. The Act as it stood at the present time would not cure congestion in a century. If anything substantial had been done since the passing of the Act by the Congested Districts Board, he held it could have been done equally well if the Act of last year had not been passed. The right hon. Gentleman had got the autumn and winter, and what were his achievements? The right hon. Gentleman was aware that last year 13,530 migratory labourers left Connaught to earn rent in England and Scotland; he was aware that 173 per 1,000 of the adult population of Mayo were forced every year to seek employment away from their homes. For how many of these migratory tenants had he got employment on the grazing ranches.

Mr. P. A. McHugh.

He readily admitted that the Chief Secretary approached this question in a sympathetic spirit, but still the right hon. Gentleman, while deploring the malady which he described to the House on 25th March last, had shrunk from applying the remedy. In the course of a speech delivered the other day the Chief Secretary said—

> "As a rule politicians are more usefully engaged in attacking problems which are under their noses with the resource swhich are in their hands."

He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman why he did not attack the Kaffir problem in Connaught with some portion of the £12,000,000 which was given as a free gift to settle the Irish land question. In his judgment, £1,000,000 spent upon the Kaffir problem in the West of Ireland would do more to settle the land question than the £12,000,000 they were wasting in the futile effort to satisfy the landlords. Reference was made in the Amendment to the resolution of the Congested Districts Board. The resolution appeared in the Report of the Board for 1895, and was as follows—

> "That the Congested Districts Board are in possession of information, through their inspectors, that there are large tracts of land that could be used to enlarge the holdings of small occupiers and promote schemes of migration in congested districts. The Board are, however, of opinion that it will be impossible for them to give effect to this important department of their work unless more funds are placed at their disposal, and compulsory powers given to them to acquire such lands at their just value."

That resolution was signed by Mr. Gerald Balfour, Sir David Harrel, Mr. Charles Kennedy, the most rev. Dr. O'Donnell, Mr. Frederick W. Pain, Mr. Horace Plunkett, Mr. James H. Tuke, Mr. Frederick Wrench, Mr. A. J. Balfour, the Rev. W. S. Green, and the Rev. Denis O'Hara. The resolution had remained, up to the present, a dead letter, and he ventured to say that the failure of the Irish Government to give effect to it reflected the greatest discredit upon the powers of British statesmanship as applied to the Government of Ireland. The Irish Party now asked that the powers referred to in that resolution should be conferred on the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners acting under the Act of last year. A member of the

Congested Districts Board, who was a friend and admirer of the Chief Secretary, had informed him that he still adhered to the view expressed in the resolution of 1895. He asked him whether he would be good enough to give him his views as to the adequacy or inadequacy of the Act of last year to provide a remedy for the congestion in the West of Ireland. With the permission of the House he would read the statement he had received from that member of the Congested Districts Board. He said—

> "In my opinion no solution of the congested districts problem is possible in Connaught unless the Congested Districts Board get compulsory powers to acquire, at a price that is not excessive, all the holdings suitable for agriculture [over £25 Poor Law valuation, which are in the occupation of non-residential tenants, and used for grazing purposes. The Act of 1903 does not give any special powers or facilities to the Congested Districts Boards to acquire non-residential grazing holdings, nor grass lands in landlords' hands; on the contrary, owing to the facilities afforded to owners to buy back, with the aid of a State loan, one-third of the lands, comprising estates, which were not subject to tenancies before 1903, there is practically no chance of the Board getting any of such land in, or convenient to the congested districts, unless they pay far more than the land is worth, and they cannot pay an exorbitant price for any considerable area of such land and settle tenants upon it without incurring a loss per family for settling them on the grass area that would be considered grossly excessive. And if they give this extravagant price, they will be fixing a standard that would be altogether too high."

He was informed that the Board had recently bought some untenanted land, and if the Chief Secretary referred to that fact in his reply, he should like the right hon. Gentleman to mention that price at which that land was purchased. That was a matter of vital importance. The average price of land bought by the Congested Districts Board up to 1903 was thirteen and a quarter years purchase, and the highest was seventeen and a half. The Chief Secretary had formerly said that, in his judgment, the average price which the Board would pay for land would be about thirteen years purchase. His contention was that the land must not only be acquired, but that it must be got at a fair price; and that the sales in cases of congested estates should only be made to the Congested Districts Board or to the Estates Commissioners. The Chief Secretary, in his speech of 3rd Februar , said that in an amending Bill the Government intended—

> "making all clear which was in doubt, and carrying out all the intentions that were expressed in this House and acquiesced in by all Parties."

There were two points on which it would be necessary to remove all doubt, and which, from his point of view, were of the utmost gravity. In the first place, they wanted to know whether, under the new Act, a landlord who owned an estate comprising partly tenanted and partly untenanted land, could sell the tenanted portion of his estate and receive the bonus on the purchase price, while at the same time he retained in his own hands the untenanted land, which might be used for the purposes of emigration and enlargement of holdings. On that point the Chief Secretary must be perfectly clear. It was necessary to impress on the House that if such things were permitted the evils of congestion would be intensified instead of being allayed; and the intentions of Parliament would be utterly defeated. In the second place, all doubt must be removed with reference to the case of the evicted tenants. So far as the Irish Party was concerned they could never consider the Irish land question settled until decent provision was made for the evicted tenants. They wanted to know whether, in the case of an evicted tenant being restored to his holding, the Estates Commissioners would be entitled to give him free grants for restoring the farm buildings and fencing, and for restocking; and likewise compensation to the farmer who was willing to leave the evicted farm. A good deal had been said last year about the desirability of a better understanding between the classes in Ireland. The position of the Nationalist Party was perfectly simple. They had been all along for conciliation; and they believed that the proposals which they made were reasonable and moderate, and that they were necessary if effect was to be given to the intentions of Parliament when it passed the Act of last year. They contended that these proposals could not injure the landlords, but if they found, when the question came to be discussed in the House, that the landlords resisted their application for the abolition of the zones, the restoration of inspection for the purpose of continuing the extortion of unfair rents, and an adequate remedy for the malady of congestion; and that they continued to deny a satisfactory provision for the claims of the evicted tenants, then the Nationalist Party would be reluctantly forced to believe that all they had heard last year about conciliation was hypocrisy and a hollow sham, and was intended merely as a means to hoodwink the House, and for the purpose of filling their pockets at the British taxpayers' expense. As far as his Party was concerned, they still offered conciliation, and they pointed out to the landlord party and the Irish Government that the only alternative to conciliation was continued conflict; and that while they, on those Benches, abhorred that alternative and honestly prayed that under wiser counsels it might be averted in the interests and for the good of their common country, they felt bound to say that if the continued conflict was forced upon them they should know how to meet it.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) said he rose to second the Motion proposed by his hon. friend so eloquently and ably but he realised—and he was sure that every Member sitting on the Nationalist Benches and in every other portion of the House must also realise—that the hon. Gentleman had absolutely covered the whole ground of the case and that it would be absolutely impossible for any subsequent speaker to add anything to the argument which had been made for the amendment of the Land Act of last year. It was indeed with no feeling of pleasure that Members sitting on those Benches had to come to the House of Commons to complain of the inadequacy of its legislation. As every one, on both sides of the House, knew very well the highest hopes were excited last session by the prospect held out of immediate relief for the tenant farmers of Ireland by the operation of the Land Act of last year. So far as the conduct of one side of the controversy was concerned strong efforts had been made to prevent that Act from being a failure. They heard much in last year's debates of the policy of conciliation. He had been and was now a supporter of such a policy,

and hoped that that policy would put an end to class conflict in Ireland and give the people a chance of settling down to the development of their material interests and thereby increase the prosperity of the country which they all loved. To that policy of conciliation there were of course two parties—the landlords and the tenants. On the one side there were the leaders of the Nationalist Party and the national movement; on the other side were Lord Dunraven and his associates in the Land Conference and also a number of landlords not concerned with the Land Conference. He asked the House to bear in mind, if complaint was made as to the attitude of the Nationalist Party, of the unreasonable character of their demands, and the inability to satisfy them on any point, that they had sought to give effect to the policy of conciliation in Ireland. The Land Purchase Act received the Royal Assent on 10th August last year, and on 8th September a most important meeting of the tenants' representatives was held in Dublin to consider the future working of the Act and to advise, as they had the right and authority to advise, the tenants of Ireland how it should be received. At the great meeting a number of resolutions were adopted, the most important of which set forth—

> "That wherever a readiness may be found on the part of landowners to sell at prices that will equal the prices under former Land Acts—having regard to the immense addition made to the landlords' price by the cheerful co-operation of the tenants' representatives—highest interests to conduct in spirit of utmost friendliness with an earnest desire to give the widest possible extension to the operations of the Act, so that any failure in its working may not be justly attributable to the attitude of the people, and that any amendment that may be found necessary may be brought about by the concurrence of all fair-minded men."

That was their sheet anchor. They came there that evening in furtherance of the adoption of that resolution.

The whole kernel of the difficulty in Ireland was the question of price. His hon. friend pointed out with great force the difference which existed between the price now asked by the landlords and the prices which were cheerfully and voluntarily taken by them under previous Acts. What were the facts with regard to some of the most prominent advocates of conciliation on the landlord side. Let them take the case of Lord Dunraven, who was one of the signatories to the treaty of peace which was to bring about the millenium in Ireland and settle all disputes. After the passage of the Act Lord Dunraven was asked by his tenants to sell his estate and he replied in a long letter. The one fact which stood out in that reply was that if his tenants wanted to purchase their holdings under what might be described as Lord Dunraven's own Act they would have to pay twenty-six years purchase. This did not include the bonus which was generally regarded as being equivalent to three years purchase in addition, whereas land in the locality had been sold under previous Acts at from fifteen to eighteen years purchase. If the Nationalist leaders had known that Lord Dunraven's tenants would be asked to pay twenty-six years purchase it would have been very difficult indeed to have induced them to recommend the Act, as they did, to the kindly consideration of the Irish people. The breakdown of the Act as far as it had gone was not due to any act covert or overt, on the part of the tenants, their leaders, or the representatives of the tenants. That breakdown should be left at the door of the landlords including Lord Dunraven. It appeared to him that when land was to be sold they were not dealing with an unfortunate rain-sodden country but with a diamond mine at Kimberley or a goldfield at Coolgardie. The landlords regarded their interest as almost as valuable as if it were situated in those favoured places.

Who would have to bear the burden if the tenants of Ireland were foolish enough to accept the baits held out to them by the landlords? He was speaking as much in the interests of the British taxpayer as the Irish taxpayer. If any deficiency occurred under the Act it would have to come out of public funds, and no doubt the Government would endeavour to make Ireland liable before touching the sacrosanct Treasury of England. He was therefore entitled to speak on this matter from an Imperial point of view, as well as from a local and national point of view. The Act was ushered in with great hopes, but up to the present it had been practically a dead letter. The right hon. Gentleman furnished a Return, which showed that only 3,000 cases had been dealt with No one could contend that that was satisfactory progress. The question was—Had the tenants of Ireland endeavoured to work the Act, or had they not? From his own personal experience he knew they had. Every unsold estate in Longford, his own county, had appointed an estate committee, and had entered into negotiations with the landlords, and if the negotiations had not been successful it was entirely due to the inordinate demands of the landlords. So far, in his part of the country, only two estates had been sold, and one of those estates illustrated in a very typical manner the way in which the zones system worked, and also how the congested districts clauses had absolutely failed. He referred to the King-Harman estate in county Longford. The rental from agriculture and grazing land was £18,053 per annum. There were 647 non-judicial tenants, paying £4,471 per annum; 679 first-term tenants, paying £8,182; twenty-seven second-term tenants, paying £146; and 295 leaseholders paying £5,236. The estate was put up for sale four months ago, and a gentleman who, he understood, took a prominent part in advising the Government during the passage of the Land Bill, was sent down to Boyle to negotiate it. This gentleman, Mr. Norris Goddard, also took a prominent part during the land war in Ireland, and was identified with the policy of the battering-ram in Kerry and other counties. He offered to the first-term tenants a reduction of 27½ per cent.; to the second-term tenants, 15 per cent.; to the non-judicial tenants, 40 per cent.; to amicable leaseholders, 35 per cent.; and to other leaseholders, 10 per cent. The tenants met, under the presidency of the parish priest, and offered the following terms: First and second-term tenants to purchase at eighteen and twenty-one years, the landlord's terms being twenty-two-and-a quarter and twenty-six-and-a-half years, respectively, without counting the bonus. A few days delay occurred, and then the tenants received notice from Mr. Goddard that, if they did not accept his terms just as he offered them, without any alteration, he would withdraw his offer, and they would not get a chance of purchasing their holdings. So far from compulsion being put on the landlord to sell, the tenants were compelled, for fear of being given no other chance of buying their holdings, to accept Mr. Goddard's terms. That case was brought before the Court in Dublin, and the Commissioners, after a great deal of persuasion on the part of the owners, agreed to accept the terms, and that estate was now going through at this enormous price. What he desired to point out in this case was the complete failure of the congested districts clauses of the Act. It had failed to change the conditions of the people who had been hunted to the congested districts in 1846 and 1847, and, if such cases as that to which he referred were to recur frequently, the passing of the Act at all must be regarded as a great waste of time. So far as Longford was concerned, the Act, except in one case, was a dead letter. That exception was the sale of the King-Harman estate, and it was sold as much for the benefit of a well-known firm of solicitors in Dublin as anybody else. The failure of this Act could be added to the many other failures in Ireland. With the failure of the Treaty of Limerick might now be added the failure of what might almost be called the treaty of Dunraven. If the amending Bill which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to bring in, was to secure the payment of the bonus to the landlords, then, in the words of Bismarck at the Battle of Sedan—

> "They might sizzle in their own fat."

The zones, as they were, were absolutely indefensible, and they were strongly opposed at the time the Act was before the House. So far as he was concerned that was entirely the fault of the landlords. The representatives of the tenants never sought to have the zones imported into the Act, and the incorporation of them was due entirely to the influence of the landlords. He would be slow to cast any doubt on the work of the Commissioners, but the hopes entertained last session that these gentlemen would transform the business of land purchase, clean out the Augean stables of Judge Ross' Court, clear up and purchase all insolvent estates, and get rid of the army of receivers who now battened and fattened on them, were hopes that had not been fulfilled. There had not been a single case dealt with by the Commissioners, and, therefore, he was rather sceptical of the value of those gentlemen. But there was no harm in reminding the right hon. Gentleman that high hopes were entertained of these gentlemen, and that they should be reminded that they had to tackle this problem of insolvent estates, and show some result for the salaries he supposed they had drawn. They had heard of no evicted tenants being restored. A scheme had been drawn up to deal with the evicted tenants, but when inquiries were made with regard to it and as to what was to be done they were told that the Commissioners must wait until some estate turned up; that if the Commissioners went after estates the price of land would be raised. Of course, no objection could be raised to that, and if the evicted tenants question was not settled it was no fault of the Commissioners. It was with no feeling of pleasure that they desired to criticise unfavourably the measure of last session; it was not because they wished to make the position of the right hon. Gentleman more difficult than it already was; it was because their hopes of the Act had been doomed to disappointment, and the men responsible for the disappointment were the landlords. The right hon. Gentleman had to determine whether he would stand by the tenants or the landlords in this matter. If he now intended to do nothing to get the land for the tenants at a fair price then they must conclude that he desired to favour the landlords, but if, on the other hand, he wished to do something in this direction the way was open to him by accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leitrim, which he now had the honour to second.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that serious amendments including the abolition of the zones system are required in the Irish Land Act of last year to prevent the unjust inflation of the price of land in Ireland; and that the powers possessed under that Act by the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board for the acquisition of untenanted lands are not sufficient to provide a remedy for the evils of congestion by the redistribution of the land among the population of the poor districts of the country, without which the Irish Land Question can never be settled; and that a power of compulsory purchase of untenanted lands such as the Congested Districts Board unanimously asked for in 1895 should be conferred upon that body and upon the Estates Commissioners acting under the Land Act of 1903, and that provision should be made that sales in cases of congested estates under that Act should be made only to the Board or the Estate Commissioners.' "—(*Mr. P. A. McHugh.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that British Members must be considerably surprised at a debate of this kind at this time. Last session they were engaged in passing a great Land Bill, and now they were raising the whole question of Irish land afresh. Hon. Members, however, might cease their surprise at once. It was a case of history repeating itself. The Land Act of 1881 was a great measure, but some months after it had passed into law they introduced Bills to amend it. Amending Acts were passed after many sessions, just as the proposals now being put forward would be passed after much trouble. There were several hon. Members absent from that debate about whom he felt a little curious. Where was the official Ulster Unionist Party? The only hon. Member from Ulster who could claim to represent the tenants was the hon. Member for Mid Armagh. But the entire official Ulster Unionist Party was absent when the interests of their constituencies were at stake. He supposed they were rather exhausted after their effort to import the Chinese into the Transvaal. For him the Amendment raised a considerable difficulty, for it assailed the zones. The Chief Secretary would be entitled to say that the Land Conference was responsible for the principle of the zones, and so far as he was concerned he was not prepared to oppose that principle. It would be remembered that when the question of the zones was discussed they moved Amendments, and supported them, not objecting to the principle of the zones, but objecting to the terms of the zones.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): No; we moved Amendments absolutely abolishing the zones, and when we failed in that we moved an Amendment altering the terms.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said he was apparently under a wrong impression. He wished to ask the Chief Secretary two questions. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to introduce an amending Bill. He was not going to discuss that before he saw it, but he should like to know was the Bill to be confined simply to the reversal of Mr. Justice Ross's decision? He wished to know would the Bill be retrospective, and would it deal with cases that were before the Estates Commissioners now, and which might have been settled, or would it deal only with future cases? He did not complain of the bad drafting of the Bill. All he would say was that almost before the ink was dry upon the Statute-book the Solicitor-General gave a legal opinion to a great Irish land-owner who asked as to the destination of the bonus. And this gentleman, who was responsible for the drafting, gave that landowner the opinion that the least that could be said about it was that it was extremely doubtful. What business had a law officer of the Crown to give opinions upon his own handiwork? The law officers of the Crown in England were not allowed to give opinions of that kind, and the Solicitor-General for Ireland might very well have left that matter to some of his friends at the Bar, for there were plenty of them with very little to do. He agreed that the Act had not touched the real difficulty, and until the points which had been raised had been satisfactorily dealt with and solved, the land question would remain not only to trouble Irishmen, but also this House. He would assume that a landlord had an estate which was largely made up of uneconomic holdings, which did not pay any rent except that which came out of English or American labour. Would a landlord in that position, holding, say, 1,500 of such holdings, and also possessed of grass land let to graziers at a high rent—if that landlord came forward to the Estates Commissioners with agreements duly signed by those wretched tenants to purchase, but with no agreement signed for the sale or purchase of the grass land, would the Estates Commissioners in any case be bound to declare that portion to be an estate, not within the meaning of this Act, but for the purposes of this Act? He wanted to know if the Commissioners were compelled to give that decision, and whether the bonus could be paid on untenanted land of that kind. Were the Estates Commissioners at liberty when a case like that was presented, and they knew the landlord was also holding grass land which Parliament intended for the poor people—were they bound to declare that an estate within the meaning of the Act?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Does the hon. Member mean the tenanted portion of the estates?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that he did. He wished to know if the landlord was to be allowed to sell those wretched holdings and keep the grass land. Take Lord De Freyne's estate. They were now dealing with the interest of these poor people, and they were not dealing with Chinese or Kaffirs, but with the subjects of the King at home. Just imagine Lord De Freyne asking twenty-four or twenty-five years purchase for those wretched holdings which had never yet paid one farthing of economic rent. Not only this, but he would be getting from the Irish taxpayer a bonus of 12 per cent. for his great kindness in selling these uneconomic holdings at fancy prices. The thing was perfectly ridiculous, the Chief Secretary for Ireland must place himself alongside this question, and these men must be told that they were not at liberty to harass and punish these poor people whom the English Government had placed at their mercy.

What was the state of affairs in Ulster? When he spoke a few nights ago he had left his documents at home, but he would like now to show what the Ulster landlord was capable of. He did not complain that thirty-two great landowners had refused to sell. They were acting within their right under the law for which the House was responsible. They were entitled to refuse sale, and thirty-two Ulster landlords had already refused. They were not men of no account, for they included such landlords as the Marquess of Downshire, Lord Deramore, the Marquess of Donegal, Lord Dufferin, and Sir Francis MacNaghten. There were no less than thirty-two of this class of landlords who absolutely refused to sell to their tenants at any price. What happened? He wished to put it to the House whether a state of affairs like that could last. What did Parliament mean in passing the Act? Simply that landed property in the possession of the Irish landlord should pass to the occupiers on fair terms, and what Parliament considered to be fair terms was this: the Irish landlord's income was to be decided by the second-term rents fixed by the Land Court, and it was decided that whatever was done the landlord should receive his second-term net income. That did not mean his present income, and that was what the landlords as a whole accepted. Did anyone think that they were going to allow one class of tenants to obtain possession by State aid and leave another class out. A state of affairs like that could stand in no country, and it would not do in the province of Ulster. He would show the House what had been done. Thirty-two small estates had been sold in Ulster, and he wished to show the reasonableness of the tenants in the prices they had given where sales had taken place, Thirty-two small estates had been sold in Ulster at an average price of 21½ years purchase of the first-term rents, 25 years purchase of the second-term rents, and 22½ years purchase of the non-judical rents. These prices were in excess of the economic value of the holdings, so that no one could say that the landlords were not getting fair terms. He would give the highest prices. For first-term rents it was twenty-three years, second-term twenty-seven, and non-judicial 27¾. The lowest was first-term seventeen, second 21½, and non-judicial twenty years purchase. He would show the reasonableness of the tenants. In over seventy-nine estates where sales had not taken place the average offer by the landlords of first-term rents was 23⅜ years, on second-term over 117 estates 26½, and on non-judicial rents 22¾. Of course these did not include the bonus, which would be added. The tenants' offers in cases where sales did not take place were on sixty-six estates an average of 19¾ on first-term, 22¾ on second-term, and over 108 estates twenty-three, and on non-judicial the average offer was nineteen years purchase. In twenty cases the landlords refused the tenants' terms, and in forty-five cases the tenants refused the landlord's offer. The net result was that thirty-two small estates had been sold, and that in thirty-two cases the great landowners of Ulster had refused to sell on any terms, and he had noticed from the newspapers that negotiations had almost come to a standstill. He knew that Lord Belmore and another nobleman were negotiating the sale to some tenants, but that was all. That was a most serious condition of affairs. If the Chief Secretary had accepted Mr. Redmond's Amendment, the landlords would not have asked for these terms, but now they were standing behind the zones, and it was impossible to dislodge them. Parliament would not act now, but it would have to before long. That was the whole history of Land Bills. As regarded Ulster this differential treatment by landlords would not do. The landlords were entitled to reasonable and even generous terms, but they were not entitled to make a chess-board of Ulster, and say what estates should be sold, and what should not.

He went into the Land Judge's Court in Dublin the other day, and anything like it could not be found elsewhere in the civilised world. They had an able Judge in Judge Ross, and he did not wish to assail him. He was told he was a partisan of the landlords, but everyone in Ireland was either a partisan of the landlords or the tenants. That Court was established to sell bankrupt estates, but the sale of an estate was the last thing it did. It had become a huge rent office. There were £16,000,000 of property in that Court. There were 80 or 100 receivers all over the country receiving rents, and scores of attorneys and lawyers making motions every day upon these wretched estates to make them more wretched still. This would not cease until this House dealt with it. Did they imagine that these receivers were going to give up their income, or that the lawyers who were fattening upon these estates were going to close the Court and deprive themselves of a handsome revenue. He saw one estate sold but the whole thing was a ridiculous imposture. He asked the Chief Secretary, was it to go on for ever. Judge Ross he did not blame. He was mastered by his officials and receivers. This Court ought be cleared right out. As to the Estates Commissioners he had nothing to say against them. Whatever they could do they would do, but were they in a position to do anything? The Chief Secretary had lodged them in a seven-roomed house in Merrion Street where it was absolutely impossible for them to find accommodation, so much so, in fact, that Mr. Wrench was in another house on the other side of the street. How could they expect the work of a great Department to be carried on in these rooms? He knew the lack of accommodation was because the Treasury, acting on the advice of the Board of Works, would not allow more. Was there a staff commensurate with the work? Everyone knew there was not, and they had thus the greatest ameliorative Act ever passed by this House for Ireland administered in rooms which were not sufficient for the Commissioners, much less the staff. What financial arrangements were going to be made for carrying out the work under the Act? That required money, but he did not believe a shilling had been got yet.

The whole question of arrears was becoming serious. He noticed that constantly and everywhere, when the landlord or his agent and the tenant had agreed as to the price the question arose as to what was to be done with the arrears. Then the arrears or the greater part of them were added to the purchase price agreed upon. That was not only a serious matter for the purchasing tenant, but for this House. Nothing was more certain than this, that if this went on the Act would break down. The hanging gale, which would never have been paid, had been, for instance, piled upon the back of the purchasing tenant. He did not wish to deprive the landlord of all arrears, but the landlord should be willing to accept a composition of arrears and not stipulate for the whole amount. He noticed that in the engagements which were being made the landlords were wholly forgetting to allow for purchase on the second-term rents. There was a tendency all over the country to jumble every kind of rent together, and to give a reduction on that. The thing was getting into such a state that, if something were not done to correct it, confusion would result, and the effects which were expected from an Act passed with great hopes of benefit to the tenantry of Ireland would be lost. He still cherished the hopes which were entertained at the time the Act was passed. They had been told that they should think Imperially. He wished the Government would think locally. He believed that things would come right if only the Chief Secretary would boldly grapple with the evils.

He saw no great difficulty about the question of the zones. He considered that he was bound by the principle agreed upon by the Land Conference. When they consented to a reduction varying from 15 to 25 per cent. he thought they established the principle of the zones. He was going to cling to the Land Conference as long as he could. He believed that on the principle of the Land Conference this was a thing that could be settled, but he did say that the landlords in Ulster were grossly abusing the zones. They were asking prices nobody could ever have contemplated. The Conference when they passed the report believed that the mean between the 15 and 25 per cent. reduction would be accepted generally all over the country. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: No.] He must say what he thought. He stood for the decadal reductions as strongly as anybody. He stood for it when the Bill was before the House, but he was not going to argue that, because the Government refused to provide for the decadal reduction in the Bill, they had any right to say that the landlord should pay it. He believed the whole of this question would be settled in Ireland if the mean of the Conference terms and the mean of the zones were adhered to. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: No.] He would not say in the whole of Ireland, but he would say it would settle the question in the province of Ulster. But the landlords were in no frame of mind to accept either the Conference or the zones. They wanted the highest prices the zones allowed, and the bonus as well. Some of them were not even civil. Here was a letter addressed to the tenantry of an estate on 30th October last. He would not state the name, but he would give it to the Chief Secretary if he desired to know—

"Dear Sir, If you wish to buy the rent, I sell nothing. I require thirty years purchase on second term rents. Lord . . . is getting thirty years; a man at . . . . twenty-seven; two men in . . . . twenty-six. This estate is more peaceable than either. In England where land is sold with timber on it it is valued down to a shilling a stick. I must be one of the valuers. You may get another if known as a person who understands timber. I do. I reserve all quarries, mines, minerals, brick, clay, and marls, and coal. I reserve for my friends and my heirs the right of going on the land with servants, dogs, and guns, to kill and carry away any game they may find. I enclose a postage stamp for reply."

[AN HON. MEMBER on the IRISH Benches: A most generous man.] If the Chief Secretary wished to see the letter he might. The House of Commons would observe in whose interests this was carried on. Ireland was not governed for the benefit of the people of Ireland, and it never had been. It had been governed in the interests of a class. That class represented England and English power up to a given date. There was no doubt about it, and the Government of Ireland was unquestionably in their interest. They had a Church established by law. They paid nothing for their religion. They got their land for nothing. They managed the whole local affairs. Local government was entirely in their hands and managed in their own interests. He admitted that they did it well. What was the use of going on with that system any longer? The Church had been disestablished; and now they had to pay for it; and they did it, and they were a great deal better off for doing it. The local government of the country had passed out of their hands; they were not even safe on the petty sessions bench. They were outmanned and beaten there. The land was passing from their grasp; not passing as it passed in the long ago out of the hands of people, when it was taken from them for nothing. No, they were getting honest sovereigns for it. Why carry on that policy? Why should they not govern Ireland openly in the interest of the whole people of Ireland, and say manfully to these Gentlemen: "This thing has gone on too long; we cannot have this country in a perpetual state of ferment, and the Imperial Parliament dealing with your wrongs and grievances! Why not give these men their ducats and let them go, and let the people govern themselves." He did not think himself that it would be good for Ireland if they did go; but he maintained that there was no use in governing the country by that class of men. They were to be paid honestly for their land, and why should they be allowed to keep the prosperity and the progress of the country back? Give them, if they would go, honest and fair terms and let the way be cleared in Ireland for all the great moral, social, and some political reforms that were thundering at its gates and required the concentrated attention of its people.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said he quite understood the desire of the hon. Member for South Tyrone not to make public the name of the writer of the letter which he had read to the House. The writer, however, had only expressed in very clear and candid language what most of the landlords of Ireland really meant. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had said one thing which ought to be noticed, and that was his comment on the condition of the business which was left to the Irish Parliament at Westminster. But at the end of this debate hon. Gentlemen representing English constituencies would flock in from other parts of the House and vote, in a division, on a subject of which they have heard not a single argument. He thought it was rather risky to put faith in such an Irish Parliament. If these hon. Gentleman had favoured them with their attendance and their attention during the debate, they might have learned a great deal which it was well for them to know from the instructive speech of the hon. Member for North Leitrim. That speech was most moderate and instructive on the two great topics with which the Irish people were concerned. His hon. friend showed that, from whatever cause, there was no doubt that during the last six months the price of land in Ireland had been enormously increased. A great many landlords were willing to sell at eighteen or twenty years purchase a year ago, but now many of them wanted from five to ten years additional purchase. What had occurred in the interim to cause that? Nothing that he could see except the passing of the Land Act. That Act was deliberately proposed by the Government to aid the tenants by reducing their annual payments from 4 per cent. to 3¼ per cent., but that difference had been absolutely absorbed by the landlords. The Chief Secretary could not possibly deny that that was the case. The Government should accept the suggestion of the Amendment for the amending of the Act by legislation. There were various ways for bringing compulsion to bear on the Irish landlords to be more moderate. As the Irish head of the Irish Executive, with the Estates Commissioners as his servants, the Chief Secretary was quite entitled to give them instructions to treat the Irish landlords as they deserved.

The hon. Member for North Leitrim had referred to the problem of the congested districts and had made it perfectly plain that these districts would not be settled except by compulsion. That was his own personal belief; and he thought that almost every man connected with the government of Ireland, in his heart of hearts, agreed with that. He himself did not represent a congested district, but there was a large estate near Dublin, in the township of Skerries, owned by the trustees of Lord HolmPatrick where he meant to address a meeting of his constituents. He, however, learned that the tenants on the estate were negotiating for the sale of their farms and he refused to hold the meeting because it might have been said that he was an emissary of evil. The result of the negotiations was that the trustees refused to sell, and these tenants, to his personal knowledge, were paying now as high a rent as any man in Ireland. The landlord of that district, which might be made one of the most beautiful seaside resorts in Ireland, was deliberately obstructing the progress of the village by putting on preposterous rents. There was no remedy for a man like that, except to buy him out against his will; and he anticipated that within a few years even the Government would find it necessary to come to that conclusion. He thought the Irish Party and the House of Commons were entitled to some information from the Government, with reference to the administration of the Land Act. His hon. friend the Member for Waterford, during the recess, in a speech in county

Sligo referred to opinions which were reported to have been given by the law officers of the Crown in Ireland with reference to the working of the Act. A curious state of things was disclosed by the history of that incident as far as it went. One opinion, referred to by his hon. friend as having been given by the law officers, was that no money should be spent on the restoration of the evicted tenants in the way of expenditure on houses, restocking farms, and so on except by loan. It was since denied that such an opinion had been given.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) said that he had not been asked the question in any shape or form.

MR. CLANCY said that personally for the right hon. Gentleman's sake he was glad to hear that, but the right hon. Gentleman's statement only made the matter more mysterious. Who gave the opinion? He thought the right hon. Gentleman had a grievance against the Government. He ought to have been asked for such an opinion and he and the Solicitor-General had apparently been passed over.

*MR. ATKINSON said that his statement also applied to his colleague the Solicitor-General.

MR. CLANCY said he did not imagine that the opinion was given by the Solicitor-General. Before his hon. and learned friend drew attention to the matter the evicted tenants on the Coolgreaney estate were informed by the Estates Commissioners that no money could be spent except by way of loan; but after his hon. and learned friend had spoken they were told the reverse, and, as a matter of fact, he was glad to be able to state that the evicted tenants on that estate were to be restored, if not to their old holdings, to other holdings, that a large demesne was to be broken up for the purpose, and money was to be spent otherwise than by way of loan. He rejoiced at that result, but he wanted to know who endeavoured to prevent it. Who gave the legal opinion to which his hon. and learned friend had referred? Whoever he was was even more mysterious than the writer of the Letters of Junius, and if he were only known he would be celebrated for such a ridiculous and assinine opinion. He would also like to know who asked for the opinion. Then there was a further opinion to the effect that the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board had no power to pay a bonus for the purchase of untenanted land. Would the right hon. Gentleman say that such an opinion was not given. The right hon. Gentleman remained strangely silent and he gathered that such an opinion was given.

*MR. ATKINSON said that the hon. Gentlemen must know that it was perfectly impossible for him to state what opinions had been given to the Government by the law officers of the Crown.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked why the right hon. Gentleman did not deny it, if it were not true, as in the case of the other opinion.

*MR. ATKINSON said he could state that he was not asked for an opinion, but he could not state what opinions had been given, that was a matter for his right hon. friend to disclose if he pleased.

MR. CLANCY said he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would convey to the Chief Secretary what had just happened. The opinion which had been given was either public or private.

*MR. ATKINSON: The right hon. Gentleman knew that his lips were closed as to any legal opinions which might have been given to the Irish Government.

MR. CLANCY asked if that applied also to another opinion with reference to the definition of an estate? He hoped that the Chief Secretary would explain the matter later in the debate. It was trifling with the House to maintain that those opinions were private. The matter was one concerning the administration of a great Act of Parliament; and it was nonsense to think that the grounds on which the administrators of the Act proposed to discharge their duties were not to be stated in this House. He hoped the Chief Secretary would be able to state who asked for those opinions and who gave them. Who asked for that opinion? Was it the Estates Commissioners? If it were, having regard to the fact that they were an administrative body placed outside the jurisdiction of the courts by an express Act of Parliament, they were in his opinion unfit for the position they held.

*MR. ATKINSON: I can ease the hon. Gentleman's mind upon that point, the Estates Commissioners never asked for an opinion of any kind, are not entitled to ask it, and, as far as I am concerned, would never get it.

MR. CLANCY said that was a most gratifying statement. Could the hon. Member make such another with regard to the man in the iron mask? Of course, he did not think that Mr. Finucane or Mr. Bayley would be guilty of any such ridiculous action. If he were to express an opinion he would say it was the Treasury, and he would go further and say he believed he could put his finger on the man who represented the Treasury on that occasion. If he repeated the rumours in Dublin he would say the Secretary of the Commission, Sir John Franks, was the agent on this occasion. If the hon. and learned Gentlemen could not answer the question himself would he ask the Chief Secretary to tell the House whether it was the habit of this Mr. Franks, who had been lately knighted, to issue these ukases to a Board which he had no right to address so long as they acted within the lines of their Department. There was one other point upon which he would like information—Why were these Amendments necessary to every Act of Parliament passed for Ireland? There had already been six amending Acts to the Local Government Board Act of 1898. The real reason was that all British Governments distrusted the Irish Members; they looked with suspicion on every proposal made by them, and, as a consequence, when the most necessary suggestion was made by them during the progress of an Irish Bill through Parliament, the Government attitude became at once antagonistic; the suggestion was disregarded, and, as a result, in a few years the Act had to be amended. It was nothing less than insulting to the Irish representatives, the manner in which the Government always imputed to them sinister motives.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said he could not help thinking the House was much indebted to Mr. Justice Ross for having expressed, in the form of a judgment, an opinion on the construction of the Land Act of 1903, because it had brought to the attention of the House and the country the necessity for the amendment of this Act as to the bonus. The whole matter had been discussed over and over again when the Act was before the House, and the right hon. Gentleman had stated he was not prepared to sanction compulsion, but thought some method of suasion such as the granting of a bonus would carry out the intentions of the Act. Mr. Justice Ross had, however, given a contrary opinion, and, that being so, the whole case ought to be reopened. He rose to ask the right hon. Gentleman and his advisers whether this amending Bill should not be framed so as to include the discussion of the other great questions involved in this Amendment, so that further amending Bills would be avoided in the future. He thought the opportunity ought to be offered, and trusted it would be offered to the House to see whether the system of zones could not be got rid of altogether. The existence of these zones would always be a great disadvantage in the working of the Act, because they had held out inducements to the landlords to insist on a price quite beyond the market price of land in Ireland. He trusted, when this amending Bill came before the House for discussion, a clause would be inserted requiring that, in every case where the landlord and tenant could not agree at once as to the price to be paid, there should be an immediate inspection of the land, and that the price should be fixed by the Estates Commissioners.

The letter referred to by the hon. Member for South Tyrone was most valuable as showing what was passing in the minds of the landlords. The English taxpayer was interested in this question, because Parliament had pledged British credit to the extent of £100,000,000 on the security of purchase annuities, and had also given £12,000,000 hard cash as a bonus. Consequently the English taxpayer was vitally interested in seeing that these annuities were not unreasonably high. If a tenant bought at thirty years purchase, and was liable to pay 3¼ per cent. on the purchase money, he would have imposed upon him a burden which, in a bad season, or even in an average season, would render it impossible for him to meet his engagement to the State. The State would be the sufferer in the last resort. It was therefore most essential, not only for the character of the Irish people themselves, but for the prosperity of the country, and for the preservation of the country to the occupiers of the land as tillers of the soil, that they should get the land at such a reasonable price as would enable them to make an honest living from their labour; but that would be altogether impossible if the landlords were encouraged to place an undue price upon the land, or to take advantage of the ignorance, weakness, or anxiety of the tenant to impose upon him a burden which the land would not sustain. This could be guarded against only by having, as had been done under previous Acts, an inspection by a responsible officer who would make sure that the price asked was such as the tenant might reasonably be required to pay. By purchasing his holding a tenant incurred an invariable liability for sixty-eight and a half years—a liability which he could not escape from or modify, no matter how bad the seasons might be or what untoward circumstances might arise. All these considerations should be borne in mind in order that the tenants might have every possible safeguard the Legislature could create to prevent them rushing into improvident and unfortunate bargains. The state of Ireland would be worse then ever if the unfortunate occupiers were to be burdened by an exorbitant rent which they could not pay. It would end either in a revolution or in universal bankruptcy. It was therefore absolutely necessary that the right hon. Gentleman should consider, in bringing in his amending Bill, whether he would not modify the section with regard to the zones and require some such security as had been suggested.

With regard to the congested districts, one of the great objects of the Act being to relieve the congestion, it would be preposterous if the measure wholly failed in that respect. There were landlords who had fine grazing lands on their hands and a number of tenants paying up to £10 a year. They would be extremely glad to sell the mountainous parts of their estates at twenty-three or twenty-four years purchase, pocket the bonus, and retain the large grass pasture lands in their hands. That would be a glorious thing for the landlords, but it was not the object for which the British Parliament had guaranteed £100,000,000 and made a present of £12,000,000. That these uneconomic holdings should be converted into fee simples at the end of sixty-eight or seventy years would be a thing at which the gods might laugh as a spectacle of absurdity and incongruity. The only way to keep these honest, decent, struggling, poor people in the land of their birth was to give them an opportunity of enlarging their farms to a living margin, and that could be done only by making the landlords who had large untenanted lands, sell the whole, so that the Estates Commissioners might parcel out and resettle the estates in such a way as to give each tenant a reasonable holding. Unless the Act were amended in the manner foreshadowed by the Motion before the House it would be a mockery, a delusion, and a snare, both to the people of Ireland and to the taxpayers of this country. The experience of the year had confirmed him in the opinion that finality was remote and that they were only in the process of evolution in the settlement of the land question, and that compulsion was the ultimate resort to which the House must at no very distant date have recourse, if the evils of which they complained were to be remedied. Meanwhile, he appealed to right hon. Gentlemen to carry out the resolution of the Congested Districts Board of 1895, for unless compulsory powers were granted to the Board the Act would be a failure, and in the meanwhile he should vote for this Motion.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) reminded the House that last session he was one of the small minority who opposed the passing of the Land Act, and if he required any justification or vindication of the attitude he then took up it would be found in the speeches to which they had listened in the course of the debate. Only seven months had elapsed since the Act passed through the House. What had become of all the hopes and expectations that were then held out? Every prediction which the minority made, had been borne out by the facts. The hon. Member for North Leitrim had declared that the

Chief Secretary had not closed the door on the Irish land question. But last year the right hon. Gentleman said that he was closing the door for all time, and it was in that belief to a great extent that Members on the Government side of the House supported the Bill. What had been the effect of the measure on the price of land in Ireland? Previously the price was seventeen and a half years purchase; it had now gone up to twenty-five or thirty years, and the hon. Member opposite had gone the length of saying that Ireland would have been better off without the Act unless it were amended. He had heard of an estate the landlord of which had always received his rents punctually and without reduction, and who had now obtained he did not know how many years purchase for it and a bonus of £240,000 in addition. What did the British taxpayer get in return for that? Absolutely nothing. Surely that was not a profitable bargain for the people of this country. Reference had been made to the congested districts and the evicted tenants, and it appeared that those questions were in the same acute stage as before the Act was passed. Further, the hon. Member had spoken of the free gift of £12,000,000 as a mere waste of public money. He sincerely hoped the British taxpayer would take note of those words.

The opposition to the measure was based mainly on three grounds. The first was that the moment for making the demand was inopportune owing to the great strain of the war. The present price of Consols showed that the opposition on that point was fully justified. The second ground of opposition was that the demand was not a final one, and that before long the Irish Members would come back wanting further legislation. On that ground also the opposition had been absolutely justified. The third ground of opposition was that the measure would not afford a final solution and that it would not be considered as a final settlement of the questions between this country and Ireland. The hon. Member for Waterford had always fairly and honestly taken up that position, but the same could not be said of the Chief Secretary, for the right hon. Gentleman had led the House to believe that they were approaching the period of the millenium so far as the Irish question was concerned. All that had now disappeared. Even so far as the land question went they were now told that the Act could not be regarded as a solution of this question. The Chief Secretary had stated, by the way of consolation for having spent these £12,000,000 and guaranteed a further £100,000,000, that the House had the satisfaction of knowing that they had done their duty. Perhaps they had, but was it not rather an expensive way of doing their duty? He only hoped that if the right hon. Gentleman on some future occasion wanted them to do their duty he would ask them to do it at a somewhat lower figure. In a recent speech the Chief Secretary had said that Ireland was entitled to perfect equality of treatment with England. He had always been prepared to grant that, but he had always understood that Ireland enjoyed an excessive representation in the House of Commons, and that if there was any inequality it was against the British rather than the Irish people. They now wanted the Act amended. Last session he had urged the House not to pass the Act because, if they did, the Irish Members would be masters of the situation. His view was not accepted, and all he would say to the Irish Members now was that they had the matter in their own hands, and could get what they liked from the Chief Secretary. Before the Act was passed the British Members were masters of the situation. That was the case no longer, and hon. Gentlemen opposite could get what they liked. If the Act had been a success and had removed the grievances complained of he and his friends would have felt that their opposition had been unjustified, but in the light of what had taken place he could only say that their action had been entirely vindicated. He did not wish to rake up any further controversy; he would therefore merely add that it must now be recognised—he thought the right hon. Gentleman himself must now recognise it—that the solution of the Irish land question would have to remain for some other Irish Secretary who was less sanguine, less visionary, less enthusiastic, but perhaps more practical, than the present occupant of that office.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) expressed the hope that the Chief Secretary would be of the same opinion as the hon. Member who had just spoken, with regard to the Irish Members getting the Act amended in the direction they desired. He believed that the Chief Secretary had done his best, as far as he was allowed, to remedy the great evils connected with the land question in Ireland, but, if they came to the House to ask for the amendment of the Act of last year, they did so because they knew Ireland better even than the right hon. Gentleman. The Irish tenants desired to give the fullest facilities for the working of the Act. The Irish Party as a whole did everything in their power to facilitate the passing of the measure through the House, and, when they went home to their own country, they encouraged the tenants to give prices above what they had been accustomed to give in order to show that they were serious in their desire to bring about a settlement of the Irish land question. Last year they were told, when the Act was being passed, that it would help to divide up the grazing ranches in Connaught among those who lived on the bogs and the mountains. They were told that the evicted tenants who had been suffering on the roadside for twenty or twenty-five years, would be restored to their holdings. Those who believed in compulsory purchase for the time being waived their plea for the enactment of powers to bring that about, in order to give the policy embodied in the Act an opportunity of being tried. They had done everything they could to facilitate the policy. Had the landlords of Ireland striven honourably to facilitate the work of transferring the land to the people, and so to promote the pacification of the country? It was evident to every man who had watched the course of events during the last six months that, instead of facilitating the work, they had done everything in their power to oppose it. During the past seventeen years while land purchase had been in operation, the average price in the congested portions of the country, where the land was poor, was thirteen and a quarter years purchase. In his own county, which was more than half congested, the average price was fifteen and a half years purchase. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had quoted the highest prices in those districts under the old Act, and he thought the figures must have surprised hon. Members who heard them. He would give the prices for his own district. Lord Lansdowne, Lord Barrymore, and a number of other landlords had sold their estates in Kerry at prices ranging from eleven to nineteen years purchase, the average being fifteen and a half years. These men got no bonus, and they had to pay the expenses of transfer. They had to accept payment in reduced land stock instead of cash. Tenants who lived next door to the men who had already purchased had approached their landlords asking them to sell. Lord Lansdowne, whose highest price for his best land was nineteen years purchase under the old Act, was now demanding twenty-five years purchase with the bonus under last year's Act. Lord Kenmare had demanded something like the same price. He could give numerous examples of the same kind of demand made by landlords. In the face of these facts how could it be said that they had met the tenants or their representatives fairly in this matter. He said they had not, and if this Act was failing or breaking down it was not the fault of the Irish tenants, who had increased the market value of the land. It lay with the landlords who had insisted on demanding from the tenants prices which were economically unfair. The transactions which had taken place under the Land Act should have fixed the price that might be considered the fair market value of the land. That price averaged seventeen years purchase on the rentals.

It might be said that there was not a fair field in Ireland, and that the system of arriving at the market value was not the same as in other countries—that supply and demand did not work as in other countries. From the Report of the Agricultural Commission in 1897, it appeared that one of the most eminent authorities in this country—Sir Robert Giffen—said that it was almost impossible for the landlords of England to get eighteen years purchase on the then rentals, though in 1875 it was possible to get thirty years purchase on the then rentals. Though these rentals had been reduced in the intervening twenty years, it was almost impossible to get eighteen years purchase. In Ireland the landlords wanted twenty-five, twenty-eight, and thirty years purchase for the land, but if eighteen years purchase was sufficient for English land, with the great facilities for sending produce to market and other advantages which farmers here had over those in Ireland, it was monstrous for any Irish landlord to ask thirty years purchase. He spoke for his own constituency when he said that, if the demand was continued, they would insist on putting a period to this hypocritical form of conciliation. The hon. Member, referring to the prices within the zones, said it was natural that when the Government said they regarded twenty-seven and a half years purchase as full and sufficient security, the landlords should go in for the highest figure the Government were prepared to accept. The Government were responsible for the raising of prices. Until that system was done away with, the landlords would continue to demand prices which it would be impossible to pay, and the final settlement of the Irish land question would be postponed. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, speaking for Ulster, said he would be content with the mean of the zones. Speaking for Munster, he himself would not be satisfied with that mean. What was meant by cheap money? Was it cheap if the interest paid for his money by the farmer was not lower than the interest paid under the Act of 1896? He contended that when all the Treasury arrangements were unravelled it would be found that money was as dear under the present Act as under the old Acts of 1891 and 1896. It was said that the landlords were entitled to have their present net income. What they were now asking was an amount of purchase money for their estates which, invested in absolutely safe securities, would bring in 4 per cent., although trustees securities at the time of the Land Conference did not bring in a rate of interest of $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. He found from the report of the Agricultural Commission that the English and Scotch landlords only received 60 per cent. of their gross rental, whereas the Irish landlords now demanded 90 per cent.

*MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) said that as he came from a constituency which would be more or less affected by the Amendment, he would hardly be doing his duty if he did not give his opinion of the case presented to the House by his hon. friend the Member for North Leitrim, and of the causes which had tended to render the Act of last year to a great extent a failure. That Act, if it was ever to be a success, especially in Connaught, could only become so by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary accepting the recommendations contained in the Amendment now before the House. That was his opinion and that was the opinion of those competent to judge by the fullest knowledge and experience of the working of the Act. He spoke from personal knowledge of facts in his own constituency, when he said that the Act since it came into operation had been handicapped, and rendered practically inoperative, by the unreasonable attitude taken up by the great body of landlords from the first. They had refused to sell, at even any price, through the Estates Commissioners; and they had refused to sell to the tenants direct unless at prices which it would be absolutely impossible for them to pay. They refused to sell outside the zones, ignoring altogether the broad basis of years purchase on which the tenants were accustomed to buy their holdings under the Ashbourne and other Acts in the past. He knew landlords in his own county of Sligo who two years ago would have willingly sold their estates at twenty years purchase on second-term rentals. To-day these same gentlemen were demanding prices which, with the bonus added, would mean thirty years purchase. Now, he respectfully asked, what had occurred in the meantime to enhance the value of land in Ireland? Nothing, in his humble judgment. On the contrary, land had depreciated in value in Ireland during the last two years, as anyone knew who had any experience of rural life in that country. Everyone would agree that the year 1903 had been one of the most disastrous which farmers in Ireland had experienced for a quarter of a century.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [18th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that serious Amendments, including the abolition of the zones system, are required in the Irish Land Act of last year to prevent the unjust inflation of the price of land in Ireland; and that the powers possessed under that Act by the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board for the acquisition of untenanted lands are not sufficient to provide a remedy for the evils of congestion by the redistribution of the land among the population of the poor districts of the country, without which the Irish land question can never be settled; and that a power of compulsory purchase of untenanted lands such as the Congested Districts Board unanimously asked for in 1895 should be conferred upon that body and upon the Estates Commissioners acting under the Land Act of 1903; and that provision should be made that sales in cases of congested estates under that Act should be made only to the Board or the Estates Commissioners.' "—(*Mr. P. A. McHugh.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. O'DOWD, continuing his speech, said that when the House adjourned he was mentioning the fact that last year was one of the most disastrous that Irish farmers had ever experienced, owing to the continuous floods during the summer and autumn. He spoke from personal knowledge, from his own vain endeavours to save his own crops. Yet it was at the close of such a year, with ruin and misery facing the impoverished farmers, that the landlords were endeavouring to impose their impossible conditions by asking such prices as compelled the tenants in despair to abandon the idea of negotiating with them altogether. Under such circumstances could it be wondered at that in many parts of Ireland the Act remained a dead letter? Could the blame for such an unsatisfactory state of affairs be laid at the door of the tenants he would ask? Unquestionably it could not. Last November, when the Act came into operation, after a most disastrous harvest; with their rents falling due, and many in arrears, in the hope of having their rents and arrears either partially wiped out or included in the purchase-money should sales be effected, the farmers were prepared to offer, and did offer, terms of a more than generous nature for the purchase of their holdings. They were met by the landlords with exorbitant and extravagant demands. Encouraged by the zones clause, which had undoubtedly tended to inflate the value of land, and taking advantage of the tenants whose rents had fallen due, the landlords pressed for impossible prices, and, failing to secure them, prosecuted for the recovery of both rents and arrears. In consequence of that stand-and-deliver policy, most of the tenants in his constituency found themselves in this position to-day, that having had to pay their rents and arrears, they were in no hurry now, and were not wishful, at present, to reopen negotiations until a better spirit was displayed. It appeared to him that the landlords had entered into a combination to deliberately defeat the aims and objects of the Land Act. The Estates Commissioners, the supreme authority charged by Parliament with the administration of this Act, had been boycotted by them. The reason for this was easy to find. When the House voted £12,000,000 last year in the shape of a bonus, all parties honestly intended that that immense sum should go a long way towards settling the agrarian question. They intended that it should have the effect of bridging the gulf between the landlords' demand and the tenants' offer, and of facilitating purchase bargains on a fair basis. It should be remembered also that several other bonuses were secured to the landlord under the Act of last year. First, there was the bonus of 12 per cent. difference between the value of cash and land stock; and secondly, the value of the permission to sell demesnes to the State and to rebuy them on the same terms as ordinary tenants; and thirdly, in the matter of the costs of sale, which were now borne by the Estate. It might have been supposed that with all these bonuses or bribes dangling before his eyes, the landlord could be brought to act in some kind of a reasonable spirit, but there seemed to be no place in his heart for either reason or justice. His idea of reason and justice seemed to be to pocket the bonuses and add seven or eight years purchase to the price of the estate. In the face of these facts it was clear that the zones system should be abolished, and that, pending compulsion, which was bound to come, all future sales should be made independent of the landlords, and only through the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board.

In regard to the question of congestion in the West, and the solution of the Western problem generally, he could reiterate what was stated in this House from these benches last July when the clauses of the Land Bill relating to the congested districts were under discussion. Unless some popular representation was introduced into the constitution of the Congested Districts Board, and additional powers given to that body and to the Estates Commissioners to acquire land compulsorily for those having no farms and those occupying uneconomic holdings, emigration could not be stopped, and the land problem, so far as the West was concerned, would still remain unsolved. What was going on even now in the West? In a portion of his own constituency, scheduled as a congested district, a large grazing farm, which had hitherto been let annually to the small tenants surrounding it for grazing purposes had been sold, not to the tenants surrounding it, but to a neighbouring landlord who, besides being a notorious disturber of the peace in that part of the country for years, held large estates and large grazing farms already in Sligo and in Galway. In another case a gamekeeper had been placed on a large farm in the congested district of Aclare. That stranger, without a penny in his pocket, had been advanced public money to purchase out a ranche which should be divided among the people. In another part of his constituency there was an estate in the Land Judge's Court which contained a large grazing tract surrounded by small holdings, which should have been used in all justice for the enlargement of those holdings. But no; it had been given to a speculating land-jobber. Those were the men to be bolstered up, to the exclusion of those who had no land, and these three men, Mr. Phibbs, of Chaffpool; Mr. Perdon, of Aclare; and Mr. McDermott, of Knocallassa, whose cases I have mentioned, have been a source of trouble to the Government for years. They are a source of expense to the Treasury just now, for I suppose the cost of extra expenditure incurred mainly in their account must now be borne by the Treasury, seeing that payment of it has been successfully resisted by the Sligo County Council.

In Sligo, out of 13,400 holdings, 3,500, or over 25 per cent., were valued at £4 and under, while there was 75 per cent. of the whole valued at £10 or under. In Connaught there were about 12,000 migratory labourers who had not as much land as would sod a lark, whilst there were 1,000,000 acres in the heart of the province in the hands of the land-jobbers. The circumstances of Connaught differed from those of other provinces, for there they had the rich plains in the hands of the few, while the masses of the population were huddled together on bleak mountain slopes and patches of reclaimed moor. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to solve these questions he would have to abolish the zones and insert in an amending Bill a clause giving compulsory powers to the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners for the acquirement of the waste lands of the west for distribution among the people. In that way, and in that way only, could the western problem be satisfactorily solved, and peace and contentment brought to the masses of the population in Ireland, who had too long been the victims of felonious landlordism and British misgovernment.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) regretted that the hon. Member for Stoke was not in his place, as he had constituted himself the champion of the British taxpayers, who was likely to suffer unless the Amendment of his hon. friend were carried. In this debate the Irish Members did not come forward with alacrity, but rather in sorrow, to point out that an Act a little more than three months old had fallen far short of the intentions of the Government, and, so far as the Irish people were concerned, had been an absolute failure. Three months ago the hearts of the Irish people beat high with hope, and they congratulated each other on the fact that a better era was opening for the country, and that the great industry of Ireland, agriculture, was in a very good way of being settled, and that the country might reasonably look forward to a period of peace and prosperity. To a very large extent all these hopes had been dispelled. No one who knew the condition of things in Ireland and had followed what had passed since last autumn could come to any other conclusion than that the Act was a dead letter and a failure. The tenants had been quite content to see this enormous bonus of £12,000,000 from the Treasury pass entirely into the hands of the landlords; they had been quite content that the landlord classes should have all the advantages of this great Act; nay, more, they had offered more than the average prices as ascertained by the Ashbourne Act, and yet the question was as far as ever it was from a settlement. He rose to express his surprise that the Chief Secretary had not seen his way to put the House into possession of the fullest information with regard to his Amending Bill, and with regard to the land question. The hon. Member for Leitrim had asked for a Return showing the number of purchases transacted under the Act of last year, yet up to the present, although it had been worked out that a clerk could easily get that information in a few hours, it had not been given. Why had that information not been given? Was the right hon. Gentleman afraid that it would not indicate such a condition of things that the Irish taxpayers and the British taxpayers generally would view without great alarm? When he heard the appalling figures quoted by the hon. Member for South Tyrone as the number of years purchase he could not but feel that the tenants had gone too far in their endeavour to make the Act a success. He could not congratulate the hon. Member for South Tyrone on the advice he had given to the tenants to pay this excessive price for the landlords' interest in the land. What was the landlords' interest in the land? Judge Madden, when Attorney-General years ago, stated that at the present moment the tenant owned half the interest of the holding. Then what was the tenant buying now under this Act? He was buying the landlord's interest, which was only half the interest of the holding, and yet paying twenty-four, twenty-six, and twenty-eight, and even thirty years purchase, and over all this a bonus was to be given to the landlord. In all the annals of extortion a case could not be found to compare with this. There was a very grave and serious danger to the tenants if this sort of thing was allowed to go on, and also to the Empire, because it must not be forgotten that the reproductive fund was pledged up to the hilt, and was liable to make good the difference between the £100 cash which the landlord got for every £100 worth of land he sold and the price of the land stock, so that the entire Irish people were deeply concerned in this matter.

But it had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Stoke that in the last resource the general taxpayer might be called upon to pay the advance in order that the landlords, at the close of a bad year, might extort from the tenant far more than the value of his land. That was a very grave and serious condition of things. It had been pointed out that the average price under the Ashbourne Act was seventeen and a half years purchase on what was called first-term rents. The first-term rents were supposed to be the net value of the lands at the time of sale. The second-term rents in their turn also became the measure of the test of the value of the land, and on that was based the calculation on which, under the Ashbourne Acts, purchases were made all over the country at seventeen and a half years purchase on first-term rents, yet under this Act the landlords wanted twenty-four, twenty-five and twenty-six years purchase on the second-term rents. In his part of the country they were asking twenty-four, twenty-five, and twenty-six years purchase on the first-term rents, second-term rents not having been fixed. It really came to this, that where land had declined in value, and the actual production of agricultural produce and stock had largely decreased — at times like that the landlords were asking from 40 to 75 per cent. more than was paid under the Ashbourne Acts exclusive of the bonus. That must prove to the satisfaction of the House that the landlords were not anxious to see this measure passed, or, in fact, to bring social law and order into Ireland.

It was pointed out that the zones system would be availed of in order to make the zones minimum practically the basis of sale all over the country. That view was proved to be accurate. In his opinion unless the Act were amended it would prove a curse rather than a blessing to the people of Ireland. It should be remembered that under previous Acts, owing to one cause or another, a certain amount of land came into the market year after year, which the tenants were able to buy at reasonable prices. Now, no landlord would think of selling at Ashbourne prices; and therefore if the Act were not amended the last state of things would be worse than the first. The other point insisted upon in the Amendment was that inspection was required for the protection of the British as well as the Irish taxpayer. There was no doubt that astute landlords and agents, dealing with an ignorant and over-anxious tenantry, were driving the tenants into improvident bargains which they would not be able to fulfil if there were a recurrence of a few more years like the last year. That was a very serious condition of things; and therefore the power of inspection should be revived for the protection of the tenants as well as of the general public. It sounded ironical that with a fall in the value of agricultural produce there should be an unnatural increase in the price of land, and that at a time of falling prices and great depression they should have a powerful landlord combination pressing for exorbitant prices. That situation could only be met by the Chief Secretary taking his courage in both hands and amending the Act.

Then with reference to the congested districts, their condition was one of the most appalling features in the failure of the Act. The examples which had been given by his hon. friend who had just spoken would almost seem to be inconceivable. The Act was passed for the alleviation of poverty and misery, and one of its main features was the division of the large grazing tracts in the west of Ireland. The result now appeared to be that those grazing tracts were to be retained in the hands of the landlords and graziers, and that the destitution of the poor people for whom the Act was passed was to be perennial. What was the use of advancing money to purchase a wretched holding on a bog or mountain valued at only £6 or £7? The tenant would only exchange one condition of misery for another; and instead of being a wretched tenant he would become an occupier who would not be able to work out a position of comfort for himself or his family. The Chief Secretary, in introducing the Bill, said that they wanted to secure for the occupier an economic holding on which he could maintain his family and himself. He added that they ought to begin to build up the agrarian situation in Ireland from the bottom, and that he had no doubt that untenanted land would be freely offered for sale. The right hon. Gentleman did not believe that any man with bowels of compassion could act in the arbitrary fashion in which certain landlords were acting in Ireland. On the estate of the O'Connor Don 104 holdings were valued at less than £4, and on the Rockingham estate there were hundreds of holdings valued at less than £5; the grass lands were being retained by the landlords, and the mountain tenants were being asked to become owners of their uneconomic holdings at exorbitant prices. He did not think that the Estates Commissioners should be empowered to sanction any advance in such circumstances, and that it should be made clear that the bonus would be paid on the sale of untenanted land if the land were sold for general subdivision. He could not help contrasting the fears and anxious anticipations of the Irish people at the present time with the hopes they entertained when the Bill was passed through Committee.

With reference to the evicted tenants, the Chief Secretary would admit that he got every possible assistance from the Irish Members in improving and extending the clauses concerning them; but, with the exception of the Coolgraney evicted tenants, nothing had been done all over the country to restore them. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; the evicted tenants were anxious to return to a life of industry, and it was pitiable to find that this great Act—and it would be a great Act if it were properly administered—an Act which was passed with the co-operation of all Parties in this House, should be blocked and marred by the cupidity of a short-sighted class in Ireland.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he only desired to say that urban districts in Ireland had an almost equal interest in this Act with the agricultural districts, because both the urban and the agricultural districts were inter-dependent. They could not have prosperous cities unless the country were also prosperous; and he, therefore, as one of the Members for Dublin, wished to make it quite clear that the urban constituencies were quite as much interested in the successful working of the Act as were the agricultural constituencies. The history of Ireland showed that ever since the British obtained possession of the country and introduced landlordism, the land system was at the root of every Irish evil. And yet when a Motion was introduced by hon. Members from Ireland, who really represented the aspirations of the Irish people, to amend the Land Act, they found the Conservative Benches and the Liberal Benches empty, and they also found an absence of that sympathetic attention which they were bound to receive from a Government which insisted on governing the country against the will of its inhabitants. The matter was one which would affect the whole future of Ireland, and the Irish Members were entitled to claim the attention of the Government; because unless real business-like attention was given to the matter the Land Act would undoubtedly be a failure. It was an extraordinary fact that the land of Ireland had been cleared of its inhabitants in order that live-stock might be produced mainly for consumption in the English market. A traveller in Belgium would imagine that there were no sheep or cattle in the country, but as a matter of fact Belgium carried three times as many cattle per acre as Ireland where the country was cleared in order to make room for cattle. Would the right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench who were political economists now take note of that economic argument? He had an intimate acquaintance with the congested districts in the West of Ireland and had driven through them all with Lord Mayor Tallon. He himself was not supposed to be one who was identified with the land war, and he never had the distinction of being in prison, but it was not his fault. He was named as a suspect under the *régime* of Mr. Forster, and he, with twelve other individuals, built houses on the De Freyne estate, which remained there still as a testimony to their capacity. If any English Member visited the West of Ireland and saw the hovels and mud cabins which the people were obliged to inhabit they would undoubtedly return with a different idea of British administration. They would find in the West all the rich land was monopolised by graziers and that the poor people were driven to the bogs, to the edges of the sea, or up the mountains. The land was created for the people, but apparently the British Government could not reconcile that doctrine in Ireland. The result was congestion. It was absolutely impossible for people who lived on small farms to exist in comfort. He hoped the Government, who insisted on governing Ireland against the wishes of the majority of its inhabitants, would recognise its responsibility in this matter. Mr. John Stuart Mill said that a Government which compelled the majority of the inhabitants of a country to leave their country because they could not exist in it, stood condemned in the eyes of the civilised world. He thought that John Stuart Mill was an authority which the Government should respect. He trusted the result of the debate would be to draw from either the Chief Secretary or the Attorney-General an intimation of the intention to pay respect to the suggestion made from the National Benches, so that the Land Act of last session, which was hailed with acclamation from all parts of the House, might have its intentions fulfilled, and thereby lay the foundation for a prosperous and contented Irish nation.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.) commented on the absence of representatives of the Irish landlords, and attributed it to the fact that they had the fullest confidence and faith that the Government would protect their interests in that debate. They had indeed every reason to be so satisfied in view of the statement of the Chief Secretary that he proposed to introduce a short Bill to remedy certain defects in the Land Act, although he did not propose to re-open the land question. Evidently the right hon. Gentleman was going to deal with the question of the bonus, in which the tenant had no interest. He ventured to say that if the right hon. Gentleman was going to confine himself to action in the interests of the landlords alone he might just as well leave the Bill as it stood. Why were they discussing that Bill that night? Simply because during the passing of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman declined to accept the views of the representatives of Ireland, who knew how necessary it was and how beneficial it would be to settle the land question. He would accept none of their Amendments; he would not listen to their warnings; he dismissed them with his beautiful smile and a gracious waving of the hand, and he led them to believe that the landlords would be perfectly willing to join in his conciliation policy; that the land proprietors would be most eager to rush the cases through the Court, and that all sections would co-operate in making the Bill a success. That, too, was the view which was first obtained in Ireland as a result of the debates in that House. That continued until the landlords' week in August—the Horse Show week—the week when the landlords and their agents assembled to discuss matters in the Kildare Street Club, Dublin. Immediately after that event a deliberate attempt was made to thwart the working of the Bill, and it was said—although he could not vouch for the accuracy of the statement—that the law officers of the Crown had a finger in the pie. Now writs and processes were being issued, evictions were threatened, and in almost every case in which the tenants had gone into Court and got fair rents fixed, appeals had been forced on them by the landlords—even where the reduction had not amounted to more than 3d. or 4d. per acre, the object of this action being, of course, to intimidate tenants from going into Court at all. Clearly after this meeting in Dublin, to which he had referred, the mask was thrown off and war was declared by the landlord party. There was a body known as the Irish Land Agents' Association—otherwise the Institution of Surveyors—in Dublin, the members of which had entered into a combination among themselves to try and defeat and thwart the Bill in every possible way. The policemen of the right hon. Gentleman were now on their best behaviour; they had given over batoning and bludgeoning in order to find out what the Nationalist organisation was doing, and what prices the tenants were inclined to take for their land. Perhaps, in view of that, the Chief Secretary would also inquire what the members of the Institute of Surveyors were doing in the matter of intimidation. He remembered very well when, during the debates, the hon. Member for East Mayo declared that the provisions of a certain clause would enable the landlords to coerce the tenants into paying exorbitant prices, the hon. and learned Member for York declared that the tryanny was all on the side of the tenants. Events had however, completely falsified that prophecy, and the landlords and agents were using that very clause to coerce the tenants into making unreasonable and improvident bargains and into paying, unjust prices.

The Bill was piloted through the House of Lords by three Members of the then Cabinet—The Duke of Devonshire, the Marquess of Lansdowne, and Lord Londonderry. What had those noble Lords—each of whom possessed large estates in Ireland—done to give practical effect to the Bill? The Duke of Devonshire had modestly asked his tenants for 26½ years purchase, exclusive of the bonus! Lord Londonderry had made no move, and Lord Lansdowne had more evicted tenants on his estate than any other man. Surely, if the Government had been sincere in the professions of a spirit of conciliation in passing the Bill, they would have taken steps to secure that Members of their own body gave a lead to the rest of the landlords of Ireland. He would like to give one or two other instances of the working of the Act. One landlord whom he knew offered in 1902 to sell the best of his property at twenty years purchase. Now he offered to sell the worst at 26½ years purchase. Another in 1896–7 offered to sell at eighteen years purchase; in 1903 he asked twenty-five years. Another some years ago offered to sell at twenty-two years, and an inspector of the Land Commission refused to sanction the sale because the price was exorbitant; that landlord was now asking 26½ years purchase, with three years bonus. Some satisfactory bargains had no doubt been completed, but in those cases the landlords had negotiated directly with the tenants and had allowed no agents or other interlopers to interfere. He repeated that there was a most deliberate conspiracy in Ireland to thwart the Bill—from the Land Judges down to——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must not attack the Judges.

Mr. CULLINAN said he simply wished to point out that the Receivers of the Court were doing everything they possibly could to defeat the Bill, and until the right hon. Gentleman put his foot down on such conduct the measure would not work satisfactorily. If farmers, under the thumb of rack-renting landlords, found that thousands of their neighbours were more fortunately placed, because they had been able to purchase their holdings at fair and reasonable prices, the right hon. Gentleman must not be surprised if they followed the example of the Government and adopted a policy of retaliation. If they did he for one would give them his most strenuous support.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said he was anxious, before the Chief Secretary replied, to address two or three questions to him. He did not propose to make a speech, for several reasons. One was that time was short and he did not want to stand between the House and his colleagues who wished to speak; and further than that he did not think it was necessary for him to attempt to put their case before the Government, because it was put before them with great lucidity, ability, and completeness by the hon. Member for Leitrim, who opened the debate, and if the Chief Secretary heard that speech, then he was in possession of what their case was. He was anxious before the right hon. Gentleman spoke to address two or three questions to him; but first he wished to make one or two preliminary observations of a general character. If he might say so without disrespect, he never heard a more absurd speech than that of the hon. Member for Stoke. That hon. Member went upon the supposition that the Irish Members claimed this Bill last year as a complete and final settlement, not only of the land question, but also of the Irish question. Well, of course, it was in the recollection of the House that they did nothing of the kind. It was within the recollection of the House that they distinctly said that, even if this Bill proved as successful as they all hoped it would, it could not possibly settle the Irish question, and, as far as the land question was concerned, they also safeguarded themselves by stating that in the absence of compulsion in the West of Ireland, and in the absence of other Amendments they considered essential, they did not think it possible that this Bill could provide a complete and final settlement of that question. Equally absurd was the hon. Gentleman's representation of their present action. He seemed to think they had come to the House that night to say that the whole of this Act, after three months working, had proved already a complete and ridiculous failure. That was not their position at all. Their position was between the two, and it was a perfectly reasonable one in view of what had occurred. Let him read two or three words he used on the Third Reading of the Bill just to show the absurdity of the position taken up by the hon. Member for Stoke. He said—

> "In the first place let me say at once that it is not our Bill; it is the Bill of the Government, and the main responsibility for it rests not upon us, but upon the Government. I must point out that the Report of the Land Conference has not been accepted by the Government in its entirety, and this Bill does not represent the Conference Report in some essential particulars, but overrides that Report, and therefore I am justified in saying this is not our Bill, but yours, and that the responsibility is not ours, but yours. Since the Bill has been introduced, the Irish Members have done their best to mould it into a shape by which they believe it will go a long way to settle the land question, and, I believe, so far as they have been able to amend it, it will go a long way; but in whatever particular it is disappointing, it will be found upon the refusal of the direct advice of the Irish Members."

This was the position in which they stood with reference to this Bill. On the other hand they never for a moment suggested that this Bill provided a complete settlement even of the land question; and they did not come to the House—it would be a ridiculous thing to do—and say after three months trial of the Bill that it was an absolute failure and had proved worthless. His view of this Act had not undergone the slightest change. There were certain drawbacks to its working and defects, but, speaking broadly, his opinion had never changed; it was exactly to-day what it was when the Bill was passed. That is, that he believed it was a measure which, when properly amended, as in his opinion it was certain to be, would eventually lead to the abolition of landlordism in Ireland. He regarded it as a great measure because it was a measure which enacted the abolition of landlordism; it provided the necessary means for that purpose and the machinery for the restoration of the evicted tenants; and under those circumstances he said that his opinion of the measure remained to-day what it was when it was passed. Unexpected defects had arisen, and these defects were of a very serious character. He was of opinion if those defects were not remedied they would practically block the working of this Act. Apart from that altogether, the process of bargaining had proved more painful and slow than any of them anticipated. He for his part in that respect was greatly disappointed. He was bound to say that his experience of the working of the Act led him to believe that all the reasonableness had been, so far, upon the side of the tenants, and that the unreasonable attitude had in most cases been on the side of the landlords, and that the responsibility rested with them for the friction that had arisen and the delay which was taking place in the bargaining, owing to the excessive prices which were undoubtedly being asked by large numbers of landlords all over the country. Still, in spite of all that, if they could look ahead ten or fifteen years, he was convinced they would find the Act amended, as of course it would be long before then—working satisfactorily, putting an end to landlordism and changing tenants into small owners. He desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman some practical questions. He had told them he was going to introduce an amending Bill. When would that Bill be brought in?

MR. WYNDHAM: Early.

MR. JOHN REDMOND hoped it would be very early. He hoped it would not be postponed, as the introduction of the Bill last year was postponed, till just before the Easter recess. They were entitled to have this Bill at once. The second question was—Would that Bill provide a remedy for all those things that were in doubt at the present time? They had been told that it would provide a remedy for the defect disclosed in the judgment of Mr. Justice Ross with reference to the payment of the bonus to the tenant for life. But that was not the most serious defect which had been discovered. He regarded the settlement on the congested estates as the most important part of the Bill, and he wanted to ask whether the amending Bill would set at rest the doubt that had arisen with reference to the powers of the Estates Commissioners in definition of estates, because it was commonly reported in Dublin that the law officers had given an opinion to the effect that where a landlord sold direct to his tenant all holdings on his property and brought them up to the Estates Commissioners to have the sale sanctioned, the Commissioners would be bound to treat that as an estate and pass and approve the transaction, even though the landlord owned large tracts of grazing land which he refused to sell. There was the most widespread misgiving on the point in Ireland. If it should turn out to be true it would absolutely ruin the value of the Bill in the West of Ireland. The sale of the holdings without the grazing land so far from being a benefit, would be a curse. Doubt had arisen upon another point, with reference to payment of the bonus in the case of the sale of certain untenanted lands to the Commissioners. There was no doubt that where a landlord sold both the tenanted and untenanted portions of his estate, the bonus might be paid on the untenanted land, but he wanted to know whether, where the landlord sold only the untenanted land without any of the holdings, the right hon. Gentleman had been advised that the bonus could not be paid. He need not point out what a serious thing that would be. Would the Bill be in such a form as would enable Irish Members to raise, by way of Amendment or new clause, such questions as compulsion for the congested districts—the constituents of the Congested Districts Board—and the zones? The Chief Secretary the other night seemed to be of opinion that by some ingenious device he might so contruct the Bill as to prevent the possibility of them raising any questions except those narrow points that he desired to amend himself. He urged the right hon. Gentleman not to take that course. By suggesting these Amendments they would not want to reopen the whole Irish land question. They wanted to concentrate themselves upon two or three of these important questions. It would be most unwise to attempt by any ingenious device to confine the debate to the two or three points which the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned. To hint even at interfering with the passage of the amending Bill was a serious thing; but Irish Members took such a serious view of these other defects, believing that unless they are dealt with the Bill for years to come would be a failure in the congested districts, that he felt bound to tell the right hon. Gentleman that if he attempted to confine his measure to these questions they would feel it their duty in the interests generally of the tenants to see that no measure of that kind for the relief of one particular class of the landlords was allowed to pass unless they had a fair opportunity of raising all those other points which they considered to be of the utmost importance.

MR. WYNDHAM said that the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent was mistaken in supposing that he or the hon. and learned Member for Waterford or the Prime Minister or anyone else had asserted that the passing of the Land Act of last year would settle all questions of controversy between this country and Ireland.

MR. COGHILL: It was certainly accepted in that belief by the great bulk of Members on this side of the House.

MR. WYNDHAM said the two occasions when such declarations might be expected to have been made were the Second Reading and the Third Reading. On the Second Reading he said—

> "We are asked, Will you settle the land question—will you settle the Irish question? Sir, I do not know."

And the Prime Minister on the Third Reading said—

> "A settlement of the Irish land question makes it far more probable that we should be able to discuss and consider the many questions—constitutional, political, and religious, racial and financial—upon which, in the past, discussion has been so acrimonious, with a chance of an unbiassed mind."

The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had asked when they would introduce the amending Bill. At the earliest possible moment, and subject only to financial obligations and Imperial necessities. He had no reason to believe that the Bill would be introduced at a late date. A second question asked was, Would it provide a remedy for all the alleged ambiguities?—that was the phrase he chose, because there had been an amount of rumour and gossip in Ireland which certainly exceeded his anticipation. He did not complain, for if they attempted to settle the land question by a loan of £100,000,000 and a grant of £12,000,000, thus affecting the interests, not only of the landlord, but of the tenant, naturally everybody would speculate as to whether things had been definitely and conclusively decided. Therefore he could not quite answer that question. His view was that he ought to decide in an amending Bill all the alleged ambiguities which he thought could reasonably occur to any sensible man in the country. If he were to attempt in an amending Bill to settle all the ambiguities which had been suggested it would be almost as long as the original Act. He was asked, Was there any doubt of the powers of the Estates Commissioners to define an estate? On the whole he thought not, but there might be ambiguity in some directions. The same question was put to him by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who asked whether, if a landlord with a number of uneconomic holdings, who was also in possession of a large amount of untenanted land, submitted a bargain for the sale of the tenanted land to the Estates Commissioners, were they bound to define it as an estate? He said clearly they were not. He had not a shadow of doubt on that point.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that would remove a great difficulty.

MR. CULLINAN: They are not bound to, but may they?

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no ambiguity in this Act which would prevent them from exercising the discretionary powers vested in them under this Act.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It is in their discretion.

MR. WYNDHAM: Certainly. There was not a shadow of doubt on his mind, and that was a point which he did not think need be dealt with. If, however, he was advised that there were doubts which ought to be allayed, that would be another matter. He had no doubt himself that the Commissioners were not bound to pass such an estate, and if they did their duties under the Act they would be bound in such a case to represent that a certain amount of untenanted land should be put into the pool. It must be a matter of discretion. The amount of available untenanted land varied in different parts of Ireland, and it would be unfair to penalise a landlord or his tenant if the former had not the necessary untenanted land at his disposal. It would then be the duty of the Estates Commissioners to endeavour, by purchasing untenanted land elsewhere, to remedy this economic defect. The greatest tribute he had ever received was the assumption which appeared to have been made that this Act ought to have settled the whole of the difficulties in three months. Of course that was quite absurd.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had not received legal opinion to the effect that the Commissioners would be bound in such a case to accept the untenanted land as an estate.

MR. WYNDHAM said he must be excused from going into the advice which might or might not have been given him by the law officers. He had, however unguardedly given him a negative answer on the point he had raised. The next specific question was whether the bonus would be paid on untenanted land which was sold with tenanted land. That could be done in his opinion, but there was a doubt which ought to be removed. Then came the question whether the amending Bill would be drawn in such a form as to enable or facilitate the raising of all the points referred to in the Amendment now before the House. For the reasons he would presently submit, he thought that would be a mistake, and he did not propose to draft the Bill in that form. Turning to the Amendment before the House he thought the ground had been fully covered by the lucid speech of the mover, so that it would be well to follow the points as raised by the hon. Member. The first was that it might be considered inopportune and unnecessary to bring forward this Amendment, seeing that the Act had been in operation only three months. He thought it was unnecessary because he doubted whether the suggested Amendments would accelerate the pace or diminish the cost of the working of the Act. As to its being inopportune it was inopportune in the sense that three months was a very short period in the life of such an Act and that the experimental stage could not be said to be over. But from another point of view it was by no means inopportune. He welcomed the opportunity of saying what had been happening under the Act. Great interest was evidenced in England in regard to the matter, as was shown by the fact that in the same week one gentleman assured him the Act was working at such a pace that a demand for £50,000,000 in one year would be irresistible, and another declared that the transactions were so impeded that the country was on the verge of a period of agrarian discontent comparable with that which all remembered and deplored. The fact that such extremes of opinion were held showed there was need of guidance. The mover of the Amendment had stated that the intention of Parliament was that there should be a transfer of land to the occupiers on terms fair to both landlord and tenant, that the evicted tenants should be dealt with, and a cure found for congestion. Well, there had been some 3,000 holdings sold for £1,500,000; that was on the average £500 a holding, and that did not suggest that the Act was being used merely to assist the purchase of large farms by comparatively opulent men. He expressed his regret that he was not able to supply Mr. Redmond with statistical information. He was only able to approach him with meagre information. He had a decided opinion that he ought not to have encouraged the Estates Commissioners to forego their arduous administrative labours in order to supply him with a debating case upon the Address. The hon. Member's argument was that the value of land was going down in Ireland. He was not going to quarrel with him on that point, but he would remind the hon. Member that in the earlier discussions on the question of purchase most of them were in agreement that the volume of purchase under the old Acts was decreasing in amount, and that the prices in terms of years purchase were increasing. He doubted whether the Land Conference would have been held but for the presence of these two facts. During the discussion over the land question he had never made himself responsible for expressing an opinion as to what the price of Irish land should be, and he was not going to do so now. The best advice on this point was to be found in the Conference Report, which assserted general principles and left their application to the parties who knew all the circumstances of the case. The averages varied in every province of Ireland—in every estate and in different holdings of that estate, and, therefore, to proceed on the principle of averages was to adopt a very rough-and-ready manner indeed. It had been suggested by the hon. Member for South Tyrone that the people of Ulster would not do badly if they purchased on terms which gave them a reduction of 4s. in the £, but the circumstances were different in every locality, and almost in the case of every individual. One landlord would not sell cheaper than the Act, and on the other hand, there were tenants who could afford to give a better price, and would sooner do that than postpone the moment at which they became owners. Again, there were tenants who did not feel that they could undertake such a serious obligation unless they saw reasonable prospects of paying the instalments for a number of years.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that he had always contended that estates differed, and he thought, as a whole, that the tenants would be safe if they bought with 4s. in the £ reduction on second-term rents. He did not say that there were not estates where they might be able to pay more, but he had always taken into account the differences that might exist.

MR. WYNDHAM said that was precisely what he intended to convey. They all admitted that there were exceptions both ways, and that was the principle embodied in the Report of the Land Conference. The hon. Member for Waterford gave them excellent advice in his speech at Newcastle, County Down, when he urged the tenants not to lose the chance of becoming the owners of the soil upon any small trivial or insignificant point, and not to enter into negotiations in a hostile, but in a conciliatory spirit. He agreed with that advice, for he thought it was very excellent. After all there was not so much in dispute. The hon. Member who moved this Amendment said that in his opinion the prices arrived at were too high. He was not going to express any opinion upon prices, because it was not for the author of an Act to lay down a standard of prices. The mover of this Amendment attributed the prices which had been given under the Land Act to the zones, but he differed from that contention altogether. They discussed the question of zones for many days last year, and during the discussion the hon. Member for Cork said he did not agree that minute inspection was a very useful matter. On the 15th of June the hon. Member said—

> "Minute inspection and valuation of over 300,000 holdings would have to be made, with the result that a generation would pass away before any general transfer of land was effected."

He invited the attention of hon. Members opposite to that point. Proceeding, the hon. Member went on to say that inside the zones it was quite necessary that some inspection should take place to ascertain that there was no subletting and other securities, but all this could be rapidly and efficiently done by men of the surveyor class, which would not involve a system of inspection by highly-paid officials to report upon security and price. Of course any Land Bill must be a compromise, but the main thing to the tenant was the substantial reduction he got upon the second-term rent he has paid. There was nothing in the Amendment for the security of the taxpayer of this country, because his security depended not upon the capital that passed, but the margin between the instalments paid to the State and the fair rent fixed by the judicial Court —a rent elaborately arrived at in order to determine whether land could or could not, taking good with bad years, pay a certain sum for a period of fifteen years. Their view was that it was legitimate to shorten the time, and to say that 2s. less than that was a good enough security for them. To shorten time in another way they said that 4s. less than that might be passed without allowing any option to any other party interested to interfere in any way. Cases would readily occur to hon. Members of this kind, in which an old man, who was the owner of the property, might sell for a song, without having due regard to the interests of others. They provided against that by an inferior limit to these reductions, and they said that on second-term rents if the reduction was lower than 4s. there should be some investigation, in order to see that neither of the parties were injured. Those terms were accepted by all parties interested on the 14th of July. It was accepted not only by the hon. and learned Member opposite but by other Members of his Party, who perhaps did not share so fully his anticipation of the success of the Land Act. He might take, for example, the hon. Member for East Mayo, who agreed that they had met hon. Members opposite half-way at least. He was not going to say whether he attached much importance to the zones or not. He did not wish to press this point in a controversial spirit, but after a long and anxious debate they all agreed that that was a compromise which might stand. Supposing the zones were of great value, or little value, he did not care which, they had no effect on prices, but even if they had, was it not unwise to disturb such a compromise so arrived at, and to court, as they did, by such an act of disturbance, a feeling on the part of the other parties that all idea of security must be abandoned? Hon. Members opposite spoke with a knowledge of their own districts. In any one district it was clear that there must have been many abortive negotiations; but if they took the country as a whole they would find that the operation of the Act was proceeding as fast, he would not say as anyone could desire, but as fast as anyone could finance it. He claimed that so far as the Government were concerned they carried out their share of the compromise, and, as far as possible, the additional recommendations made by hon. Members opposite. And in order not to disturb the sense of security which still did obtain in Ireland he would ask hon. Members to think once and twice before they suggested the re-opening of a compromise definitely arrived at after prolonged debate within three months of the day on which the Act came into operation.

He would now give some information as to what was going on in Ireland. The total amount of direct sales embraced 135 estates, 3,070 holdings, and £1,500,000 of purchase-money. In correction of false estimates which had been given of the money which passed in connection with the sale of the Leinster Estate, he would say that the purchase money was £640,000, and the bonus was some £170,000. It was difficult to collect all the information asked for, but inquiries had been instituted at random into 1,580 cases of sales. Of holdings upon which rents had been fixed before August, 1896, there were 580, the reduction had been 29·4 and the average number of years' purchase had been 21·7. Of holdings upon which rents had been fixed since August, 1896, there had been 728, and the average reduction had been 19·7. That was very near the mean, but that was an accident. One feature in the first clause of the Act to which he invited attention was that a distinction was made between judicial rents and non-judicial rents. Of holdings upon which no judicial rent had been fixed there were 543, and the average reduction in those cases had been 30·7. He did not think he would be justified in going at great length into arithmetical calculations; but supposing such results were normal it would pay a man in Connaught to buy on those averages, even if he had a first-term rent, rather than wait to have a second-term rent fixed.

He would now deal with the question of untenanted land. The Amendment suggested that the Estates Commissioners had not sufficient power to purchase untenanted land. Strongly as he objected to the principle of compulsion, deeply as he believed it would disturb the spirit of conciliation now existing in Ireland—[A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Where is the conciliation by the landlords?]—Well, perhaps he might be permitted to waive that, and to say that he did not think it was necessary at this moment to suggest that the powers for securing untenanted land were ineffective. The procedure under the Act was entirely novel, and it was hardly possible in three months to devise a staff organisation to get into touch with all the untenanted lands that might possibly be bought. There were many difficulties in the way of working this Act, but he had not found that the absence of compulsory powers was one of them. It was of the essence of the Act that where that was possible they should look rather to direct arrangements between the landlord and his tenants and others who might wish to occupy untenanted land. They could not expect that men would take up in three months an entirely novel process and devise a completely new manner of managing their estates. In the circumstances he thought the results were fairly good. He had a list of twenty-two estates, and he found that the landlords had made arrangements for selling 7,650 acres of untenanted land to persons mentioned in Section 2 of the Act or to the Commissioners for the purposes of the Act.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal S.): How many of these estates are in Connaught?

MR. WYNDHAM said his information on that point would come in better when he was dealing with the purchases by the Congested Districts Board, but some of these were in Connaught. Besides these estates there were some which had been sold under Sections 7 and 8—that was entirely untenanted land—to the Estates Commissioners under the Act. He would point out to hon. Members opposite that the question of congestion could not be dealt with on the lines which were advocated in this Amendment. It was suggested that all defined as "congested estates" must of necessity be sold to the Estates Commissioners and ought not to be dealt with by voluntary arrangement between the landlord and the tenants on the property. If they succeeded in carrying the Amendment they would largely limit and paralyse the operation of the Act. Over and over again it would be found that one landlord owned a large property, part of which was composed of very rich large farms, part of fairly good farms, and part rushy and mountainous land. An estate of that character could not be dealt with on any uniform plan. They must not fetter the discretion of the Estates Commissioners before the Act had had a fair trial. Suppose he did accept the Amendment, which, of course, he could not do, and declared that all congested estates should be sold to the Commissioners, there might be estates a portion of which only was congested. That portion would have to be sold to the Commissioners and the rest would be left to be disposed of by direct sale. They must leave to the landlords a chance of solving these problems. As to the case of the evicted tenants, he had been asked whether money could be advanced under the Act as a free gift to put back evicted tenants. All he could say was that there was no more money now and no greater limitation on the use of the money. He had never had any doubt in his mind on the point; but he must not be held to say that there was an unlimited amount of money to give to people who could borrow. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had asked whether the amending Bill would be retrospective. That would be so. With regard to sales in Ulster, better news had reached him than had reached the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He knew very well large estates in Ulster which were going to be sold in the near future, and he believed the sale of them would determine the sale of others. The Bill was accepted to be worked and given a fair chance. He did not complain of the Amendment, which afforded an opportunity of seeing how things were going on, but three months was a very short time, and he recommended hon. Members to give the Act a rather longer run. There had been no occasion so far for advocating compulsory sale in the congested districts. The Act had only been in operation since December, and the Congested Districts Board had purchased seven estates for £156,900; it was in negotiation for the purchase of six estates for £100,672, and it was considering the purchase of sixty other estates. Could anyone suppose that with compulsory powers they could secure the purchase in even six months of more than seventy estates? In the purchases already completed they had got more untenanted land than tenanted land. They had bought 2,300 acres of untenanted land, they were negotiating for 1,600 acres more, and were having reports made respecting 15,000 acres. What good would compulsory powers have been to them? The mere mention of compulsory powers would make every landlord of untenanted land draw back into his shell. On the other hand, they had had no difficulty in buying untenanted land suited to their needs; and he had no doubt that, when the owners of grass land knew that they were to be paid a fair price, such land would come more rapidly into the market, and they would proceed apace with the solution of the difficult question of congestion. Compulsory power, so far from helping them, would lead to loss of time, of temper, and to the breaking up of the general agreement that existed that they should deal not only with the transfer of land to the occupier, but with the problem of the evicted tenants, and with congestion. At the present rate of progress it would be a severe task upon him to see that the financial limit of £5,000,000 was not exceeded in one year; and in the present state of the money market it would not be possible to ask for more than £5,000,000. Indeed, prudence dictated that they should take less, but a bargain was a bargain. He said they would finance land purchase at that rate for the first three years, and he stood by his part of the bargain. Land purchase was going on as rapidly as one could expect it to go within the financial limit he had laid down, and surely if differences existed on this or that thorny question they might be allowed to wait for six months, or even one or two years, and be settled by the general spirit of conciliation. He thought that they might all congratulate themselves that the Bill had been brought in last year instead of this. They seized the occasion which the Land Conference offered. In December, 1902, Consols were at ninety-two and a-half, in January last at ninety-three, and on 16th February at ninety-two and three-quarters. Now Consols stood at eighty-six and a-half, so that had the Land Conference not occurred last year, the fall in Consols would have made it impossible to bring in a Bill this year. They should make the best of the chance that had befallen them, and agree that in the Act there was still to be found elements which might conduce to a fuller and richer national life in Ireland, and to a more complete accord among all classes in that country.

Sir EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) said he did not propose to attempt to follow the right hon. Gentleman in the technical merits of the question. That he would leave to those who might be better informed on these points than he was. Speaking from the point of view of the British taxpayer, he confessed he was not at all discouraged in regard to the working of the Land Act. Even the hon. Member for Stoke, who posed as the representative of the British taxpayer, admitted that it was better for the taxpayer that the Act should be a success than a failure; and as hon. Members came from Ireland and proposed certain Amendments, which they affirmed would ensure the success of the Act without entailing the voting of more money, the hon. Member for Stoke ought to have jumped to those Amendments. But the hon. Member took too narrow a view. While he made himself partly responsible for the Government of Ireland, he must take the view of a statesman as well as that of a British taxpayer. The hon. Gentleman made the attempt to be a statesman, and asked what was the return to be for all this money; was it to be the increased prosperity of Ireland? There was a general confession that the dual system of land ownership had paralysed the prosperity of Ireland, and it was also a general confession that the evils of the Irish land system had been due to the mistakes of the British Parliament. If all this was to be put right, the increased prosperity of Ireland and the enjoyment of a better conscience, would amply repay the British taxpayer for any sacrifices he had made. He agreed entirely with what had been said by the hon. Member for Waterford as to the limitation of the hopes to be founded on the working of the Act. It had never been put forward as a final settlement of all outstanding questions, certainly never by the Chief Secretary. It might be that it would have an effect on political movements in Ireland; it might be that it would unite classes hitherto divided; it might be that it would disentangle political questions from future controversies about land, and bring about a calm and reasonable way of discussing these questions. That might be, and he hoped it would be. But no one would be aggrieved if it did less. The Act was not intended as a final settlement, but only as the great beginning of the settlement of the land question; and many things had to be left out of it last year because it was undesirable to overload it. The Chief Secretary had said that three months after the Act came into operation was too soon to consider its Amendment; but he then proceeded to promise that on an early day he would introduce a Bill to make some Amendments! Therefore, the difference between the Chief Secretary and the Irish Members was not one of principle or time, but only one of degree. He did not intend to enter into technical points, but he had been impressed by the remarks of several hon. Members from Ireland as to the apparent rise in the price of land, or the price expected for land. He could not help thinking that there was a possibility of the zones system resulting in defeating the successful working of the Act, because that system might induce people to stand out for a higher price. The question of price was of the very essence of the working of the Act, and he had always felt that sooner or later a larger measure of compulsion would be required to complete the work of the Act.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CARSON, Dublin University): No, no!

SIR EDWARD GREY said that the Solicitor-General for England said "No, no!" to that, but he went further. He considered that the provision of a cheaper and more rapid method of working a compulsory system of land purchase was to be desired and expected not only of Ireland but for home as well. That was one of the problems we would have to solve soon. He thought that before they completed and settled the Irish system they would have at any rate to keep an open mind with regard to the introduction of compulsion. He did not wish to hustle the Chief Secretary, if he might use a fashionable phrase, but he did feel that steady pressure was justifiable and desirable; and he was not sure that the Chief Secretary himself did not feel that steady pressure sometimes strengthened his own hands. He looked upon the Act of last session—and he gave the Chief Secretary and the Government full credit for it—as a great beginning, but it was not yet the end. The Government had it in trust to see that the Act was a success. He was not surprised that experience had already suggested some Amendments to that Act. He hoped experience would suggest further Amendments. He trusted that the Chief Secretary would keep an open mind with regard to future Amendments while he was in office, because he was sure that his own Government or any future Government would have to introduce further Amendments from time to time in the working of the Act, and he hoped he would carry that open mind with him if it ever should be his fate to cross the floor of the House and give a frank and sympathetic support to the Amendments which might come from the Government which succeeded him.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he felt it almost a rudeness to try and wake up the House from the dream which the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was calculated to excite. The whole tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman showed an absolute want of appreciation of the real state of Ireland at the present moment. They had been accustomed to Chief Secretaries of all Parties coming to the House and picturing Ireland as a perfect Paradise of almost unbroken peace on the very eve of an outbreak of agrarian discontent. He warned the House that they should not regard Ireland from the point of view of the lotus-eater, but study the real conditions of the country. They had had a most disastrous season. He believed that in England the land question would be settled, on right and just lines, by a compromise on the part of both tenants and landlords. On the other hand, in Ireland the landlord was the spoilt child of legislation, though the hon. Gentleman opposite would say that they were the despoiled children of legislation. But it required all the machinery of agitation and courts of law to compel them to give the reduction of rent which every decent landlord here gave to his tenants. By last year's Act the Irish landlords were actually paid for selling their land at a very good price. If any landlord in England was offered a price for his land equal to 90 per cent. of the gross rental, he would at once jump at it, and invest the money in industrial enterprises in this country. At the present moment the landlords of Ireland, instead of meeting the situation caused by the disastrous season in a reasonable manner, were offering their land for sale at zones prices, which no tenant ought to entertain, and which no tenant would entertain unless he took leave of his senses. Arrears were playing their ancient part in Ireland, and their old friend the hanging gale had once more raised his sinister head, and was being used by the landlord for the purpose of extracting an extravagant price from the tenant. All over the country there was a feeling of disappointment at the working of the Act, and of strong indignation against the landlords. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said he had nothing to do with the price. Was the right hon. Gentleman not the author of the zones section of the Act? The zones were in the Act for the purpose of inflating the price in Ireland. Members on these Benches had told the right hon. Gentleman so last year till they almost imperilled the Bill. When the right hon. Gentleman put up his blunderbuss at their heads, what choice had they but to accept what he offered? Three or four years ago a landlord went to the Land Commission and said that he and his tenants had agreed that his estate should be sold for eighteen years purchase, but the Land Commission declared that they would not sanction eighteen years purchase, because it was unfair to the tenants and to the estate. Now, however, the same landlord was asking twenty-five years purchase. The Chief Secretary had said that he was going to bring in a Bill, the scope of which most of them regarded as mainly to the advantage of the landlord, and he announced that the Bill would be in such a shape as to preclude the discussion of the interests of the tenant. These declarations compelled the Irish Members to divide.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 124 ; Noes, 219. (Division List No. 5).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert Jn.
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Hardie,J. Keir (M'rthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mitchell, Edw.(Fermanagh, N.)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipperary,M.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wood, James
Young, Jamuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt.Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, Lt.-Col.H.F(Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)

Brymer, William Ernest
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, RtHn.J.A(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T.R(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E(Elgin&Nairn)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N. R.
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W.J.H(Dumfriessh.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W.(Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Jamuel (Sheffield)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mb.Tynesid
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 19*th February,* 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Mid-Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1ª.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with. Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal [H.L.]; Young and Bell's Patents [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) [H.L.]; Gosport Water [H.L.]; New River Company [H.L.]; New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Ilford Urban District Council Bill [H.L]; Lothians Electric Power Bill [H.L]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Filey Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Shipley Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]. Committed.

Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bridlington Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Buxton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Derwent Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ebbw Vale Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad Bill [H.L.]; Holywood Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]; Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ulster Electric Power Bill [H L.]; Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]: Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

PETITION.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL [H.L.]

Petition in favour of; of Corporation of Lewisham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (NEW SCHEME OF TRAINING).

Reports of the members of the Interview Committee on the selection of candidates for nomination as Naval Cadets. Prsenteed (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOAN SOCIETIES.

Abstract of accounts of loan societies in England and Wales furnished to the Central Office for the Registry of Friendly

Societies, for the year ended 31st December, 1902. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committed to it by the House.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

E. Cowper.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
V. Churchill.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)

NEW BILL.

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for re-arranging the Boundaries of the Dioceses of Bristol and Gloucester and Bath and Wells—Was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury (for the Lord Bishop of Bristol); read 1^{a}; and to be printed. (No. 13.)

NEWCASTLE CHAPTER AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. ALBANS: My Lords, this Bill is word for word the same as one which was passed without opposition in your Lordships' House during the latter part of last session. It was not possible, however, to pass it through the other House owing to the congested state of business there, and it was thought better to withdraw it and bring it before your Lordships at an early period in the present session. If it is desired I shall be pleased to explain its provisions at a later stage. Meanwhile I will content myself by moving the Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}"—(*The Lord Bishop of St. Albans.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Bill read 2^{a}, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

FISCAL POLICY—DUTIES ON IMPORTS.

Order of the Day read for the adjourned debate on the Motion of the Earl of Crewe to resolve, "That no duty upon imports into the United Kingdom from Foreign Countries, or from British Colonies and Dependencies, should be imposed, modified, or removed, without the formal consent of Parliament to each such proposal;" and on the Amendment moved by the Marquess of Salisbury to the foregoing Motion, viz:—

> "To leave out all the words after 'that' for the purpose of inserting the following words, viz.: 'This House, while affirming the constitutional doctrine that all the fiscal arrangements of this country must be subject to the full and effective control of Parliament over taxation, is not prepared to lay down rules for the guidance of future Parliaments as to the exact method in which such control should be exercised by them in cases which may hereafter arise.'"

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I have had considerable doubt whether it would be necessary for me to trouble your Lordships with anything in the nature of a personal explanation as to the reasons which caused me last autumn to resign the office in His Majesty's Government which I then had the honour to hold. But as two of my colleagues who resigned their offices about the same period have thought it due either to their constituents or to the House in which they sat or to themselves to enter upon some explanation of a personal character, and as, in addition, the Prime Minister thought it necessary—as he had not thought it necessary on the other occasions—to reply to my letter of resignation in a tone which perhaps was somewhat controversial, I hope that I may ask your Lordships to allow me in a few words to try to explain the reasons, not so much why I thought it necessary ultimately to resign my office, but why that resignation was for some considerable period delayed. Let me say first that I have no complaint whatever to make of what I have referred to as the controversial tone of the reply of the Prime Minister. I fully recognise that some inconvenience may have been caused to him, and perhaps also to the public service, which might have been avoided if my resignation had been sent in at the same period as that of my colleagues; and if this was so, I desire to express my extreme regret for any want of judgment or any want of decision which may have been the cause of such inconvenience.

My colleagues, who have already made personal explanations, Mr. Ritchie and Lord George Hamilton, were perfectly justified in the statement they have made, that at the time when they resigned their offices they had every reason to believe from the communications which had passed between us that I intended to have taken the same course at the same time. I do not think it is necessary that I should enter at all fully into the reasons why I formed that intention. Those reasons were, in the main, identical with those which have been fully stated by my colleagues. I perhaps could not have formulated so distinctly as they did the reasons for their action, because I had not at the time, and I have not even now, a very clear idea of what were the measures to which we were asked at that time to give our assent, or of what was the policy to which we were asked to commit ourselves. It may be enough for me to say that both the action and the language of the Prime Minister and of some of his colleagues since the first opening of this question had been to me a cause of great anxiety and doubt. I felt myself obliged to dissent from much that was contained in the pamphlet which has been published by the Prime Minister, and from some of the contents of the Memorandum which was circulated to his colleagues at the same time. I also had in my mind that two only of my colleagues had prepared for the Cabinet Memoranda dealing with the proposals which had been put forward by our colleague the late Colonial Secretary, and had made criticisms of those proposals with which I was on the whole in entire agreement.

At the Cabinet which met on 14th September it was clearly indicated that in the opinion of the Prime Minister the opinions of these members who had expressed themselves in these Memoranda were such as to make it impossible that they could give their assent to the policy which he was about to propose, and that it was not likely that it would be possible for them, with satisfaction to themselves, to remain members of his Government. Sharing as I did in the main the views which had been expressed by my colleagues, I did not see how, if in the opinion of the Prime Minister they could not with advantage remain in his Cabinet, the same considerations should not apply also to my own case. But there was, however, another reason, which was not referred to in the letters of resignation of my colleagues, but which had a great influence upon me, and I think must have had some influence also with them. I think we were, none of us, quite clear as to the nature of the declarations which the Prime Minister might think it necessary to make in his forthcoming speech at Sheffield; but what I felt, and what we all felt, was that, whatever might be the nature of these declarations, it would be impossible for us to continue to be members of a Cabinet in which the Colonial Secretary would be free to advocate principles which we knew he had adopted, which we also knew it was his intention, either in or out of the Cabinet, to advocate publicly throughout the country. Such a state of things would, I think, have been highly unsatisfactory to us, and contrary to the best interests of the public service. It would have been necessary in such circumstances for me either to remain silent —which would have been an intolerable position for myself—or to have taken an open part in combating a policy which my colleague was advocating, which, I think, would hardly have been a course that would have been decent to colleagues in the same Cabinet.

It is quite true that at the Cabinet to which I am referring some mention was made of the possible resignation of Mr. Chamberlain. My recollection, however, agrees with those of my colleagues who have already stated their views on the subject, that that resignation had not been definitely tendered, still less that it had been, or was likely to be, accepted without protest on the part of the Prime Minister. It is also true that on the evening of the same day, after the Cabinet, I had an interview with the Prime Minister, in which he again referred to the possibility of the resignation of Mr. Chamberlain. But, even at that time, it was not presented to me in such a manner as to lead me to understand that a definite tender of resignation had been made, still less that it was likely to be accepted. At a further interview the next day the subject was again referred to, and the resignation of Mr. Chamberlain was spoken of as being extremely probable, if not certain; but it was not until the third day, the Wednesday of that week, that I learned definitely and finally that that resignation had been tendered and had been accepted. I admit that this communication appeared to me to make a very great difference in my position.

As I have said, I was not even then clear as to the scope and nature of the declaration that the Prime Minister intended to make at an early date; but I understood that it was to be mainly on the lines of his pamphlet, with which your Lordships are all acquainted; and from passages in that pamphlet, and also from communications which took place between myself and the Prime Minister, I thought I was justified in the statement which I made in the letter in which I finally tendered my resignation. The passage is very short, and perhaps your Lordships will allow me to read it—

> "I had hoped to have found in your speech a definite statement of adherence to the principle of free trade as the ordinary basis of our fiscal and commercial system, and an equally definite repudiation of the principle of protection in the interests of our national industries."

I thought, from the reasons which I have endeavoured to indicate, that I was justified in forming that opinion as to the general character of the statement which the Prime Minister intended to make. I thought at the time, very wrongly I am afraid, that it was possible that my continued presence in the Cabinet might have the effect of, in some degree, restraining that body from any very wide departure from the principles of free trade to which I still adhered. Still my position, I acknowledge, I felt to be an extremely difficult one. But from that moment when I was definitely assured of the resignation of the Colonial Secretary my difficulties were mainly of a personal and not of a public character. I pointed out to the Prime Minister that the effect which the fact of Mr. Chamberlain's resignation had on my mind would in my opinion probably be similar to the effect which that fact would have on the minds of those other colleagues who had already tendered their resignations and whose resignations had been accepted. I understood, however, from him that, whatever might be my decision, there was no intention of asking those colleagues to reconsider theirs, or in fact that any reconsideration on their part would be admitted. My difficulty, therefore, was mainly of a personal character; it was whether I should be wanting in loyalty to those colleagues with whom I had been in communication, who had consulted me as to their course, and whom I had consulted as to mine. My first inclination, I admit, was to insist on being permitted to lay this new fact before my colleagues and consult again with them, and, in fact, to place myself to a great extent in their hands. On reflection, however, I considered that, as nothing which I could do would alter their position, I had no right to ask them to take any responsibility for my own conduct, which affected myself alone, and that my decision must be made solely upon public grounds. I therefore decided that under these new circumstances it would be my duty to remain a member of the Cabinet, and to exercise what influence I might possess in endeavouring to guide or restrain the action of the Cabinet.

There is one further explanation, or perhaps I ought rather to say one further confession, which I have to make. It is quite true, as was stated in the Prime Minister's letter of reply to me, that I saw before I finally gave my decision the letter in which he had accepted Mr. Chamberlain's resignation. I think if I had at that time fully grasped the significance of that letter my decision would have been a different one. But I can only plead in excuse that the letter was only read to me, that I had no opportunity of considering its terms carefully; and I will also ask noble Lords to remember that this was the third day of these proceedings, days which had been occupied incessantly in meetings of the Cabinet, in interviews, and in correspondence, and the strain upon my mind was very great, as I think it would have been on the mind of any man. I was not in a position, my mind was not so clear and lucid as it ought to have been, and I did not, as I ought to have done, fully grasp the significance of the terms in which the resignation had been accepted. On the next day the Prime Minister had left London; I had an interview, however, with his private secretary, and I again had an opportunity of reading the correspondence with Mr. Chamberlain. That more careful inspection of the correspondence, I acknowledge, filled my mind with the very greatest anxiety, and I doubted whether I had taken a wise step in consenting to remain in the Cabinet. I felt, however, that it was too late to recall my decision, and that I could only trust and hope that, notwithstanding the terms of that letter, the declarations which would be made by the Prime Minister would not be inconsistent with those which I had previously expected. With that object, I had, I think, another interview with the Prime Minister's private secretary, in which I impressed upon him to the best of my ability that I trusted that those declarations would be consistent with the opinion which I had formed that the Prime Minister did not intend to depart widely from the principles of free trade as the accepted basis of our fiscal policy.

I have stated already in my letter the reasons which induced me to think, after I had read the speech at Sheffield, that I had altogether misconceived the position and the opinions of the Prime Minister. Although I did not then, and although I do not now, know what measures I might ultimately have been called upon to defend in this House, I did feel that those declarations, to which I have called special attention in my letter, were entirely opposed to the impressions which I had formed and which I had expected to be fulfilled. It would have been impossible for me, when Parliament reassembled, to stand at this Table, or on any platform in the country, and to profess myself, as a member of the Prime Minister's Government, still a convinced free-trader, as I am, and always hope that I shall remain. That is, I think, all that I have to say on the personal question. I trust that I have not said anything which may make it necessary for any of us ever to reopen that question, which I am sure your Lordships will admit is, and must be, one of extreme pain and difficulty for me.

I desire to offer a few observations on the subjects which have been raised in the present debate. I think that my noble friend Lord Crewe has rendered no inconsiderable service to the House and to the country in raising a discussion upon one side of this question, which up to the present time, I think, has been inadequately discussed. A great deal has been said—not, in my opinion, at all too much—upon another side of the question, that of the attitude of the Government towards the policy which has been proposed, not by them, but by Mr. Chamberlain. But up to the present time very little, comparatively, has been said on the subject of the Government's own policy, or of the proposals which they intend to make either to Parliament or, before a general election, to the country. It is a somewhat curious and remarkable feature of the extraordinary position in which we find ourselves that ten times as much interest—I think I may say a hundred times as much interest—appears to be roused throughout the country in the policy which is advocated by Mr. Chamberlain, and in the attitude of the Government towards that policy, than is excited by the Government's own proposals.

The Government have asserted, and I believe still assert, that they have a policy. The Prime Minister at Sheffield declared that, this question having been raised, it was his intention to give a lead to his Party and to the country. I ask, Where are we to find this lead? It is unfortunate that the Prime Minister has been unable to further explain his views in the House of Commons; but surely he must have colleagues in the House of Commons who would have been fully capable of explaining those views if there had been anything further to explain. The Prime

Minister has written a pamphlet and he has made three speeches; and in those, up to the present time, we must find the materials for forming an opinion on the policy of the Government and on the lead which he desires to give to his Party. In the pamphlet the most definite expression that I find is that he pleads for "freedom to negotiate in order that freedom of exchange may be increased." In the speech at Sheffield I find also the definite declaration that he intended to reverse the fiscal policy of the last two generations. That declaration would seem to imply that as the fiscal policy of the last two generations had been one of free trade the Prime Minister's intention was to revert to protection. But we have been assured that that is not the present intention of the Government, and therefore we have to fall back on the freedom to negotiate in order that freedom of exchange might be increased. That does not appear to me to be so much a declaration of policy as the expression of a sentiment; and until that sentiment is reduced to concrete proposals I maintain that we have not got—and the country has not got—the lead which we have the right to expect.

If the complexity and difficulty of this position could have been increased I think it would have been increased by the speech of my noble friend Lord Selborne last night. Lord Selborne told us that it was impossible to explain the details of a policy which was not yet born. I ask, how are we to accept as the policy of the Government or the lead which the Government have promised to give to the country a policy which, in the words of one of his colleagues, has not yet come into existence. Under these circumstances, it is perhaps not strange that we have not derived very much enlightenment from the debates which have taken place in the other House of Parliament. We have to-night one more chance of obtaining that enlightenment. My noble friend who leads the House holds a position only second in authority to that of the Prime Minister himself, and it may be—I hope it may be—that he will be in a position to throw some light upon this perplexed condition of things. He told us the other day, in words spoken with some deliberation, that the Government presented a solid front on that part of the policy which they had examined and to which as a Government they were committed. What we want to know is, What are the results of that examination which has been given? I trust that I do not put this question in a hostile spirit to the Government. As I have admitted, while I was a member of the Government I was perfectly ready to enter myself into an examination of certain proposals; but while I was a member of the Government certainly no examination of this policy had yet been undertaken, and if I had remained in the Government I should have expected that such an examination would be made before the meeting of Parliament, and that its results would be communicated to Parliament.

We have never got nearer to a definition of the policy of the Government than that which was given to us by the noble Marquess at the opening of the session. "The policy of the Government," he said, "might be summed up in the words negotiation and retaliation." It is perfectly possible that a policy which has been fully and adequately explained may be summed up in two words; but there never was a policy—and I do not think that there ever will be a policy—which, in the absence of such adequate explanation, could be summed up sufficiently for the consideration of Parliament or the country in a couple of words. Though we have often heard this summing-up of the policy of the Government we have never received any indications whatever as to the manner in which those principles are to be applied to our future fiscal policy. As to negotiation, the Government have always, in my opinion, been free to enter into negotiation.

The Prime Minister says that we deprived ourselves of the means of successfully conducting negotiations, and the other night, in the House of Commons, Mr. Wyndham attributed the failure of certain negotiations with France which took place in 1880 to the absence of any fiscal inducement which it was in our power to offer. I think Mr. Wyndham was not quite accurately informed with respect to that negotiation. It is not the fact that in that negotiation we had nothing to offer. Parliament had already been asked, and had assented, to a reduction of the duties on French wines in the event of the conclusion of a treaty. The obstacle which prevented the conclusion of that treaty was the pledge which was given to Parliament by the Government—rightly given, I think, at that time—that they would not assent to any treaty which should provide for the imposition of higher duties than those which had been agreed to by the French Government in 1860. The French Government, I believe, were perfectly willing to comply with that demand on the part of our Government; and the obstacle which prevented the conclusion of a fresh treaty with France was the unwillingness of the protectionist majority in the French Chambers to agree to the proposal to which their Government were quite ready to assent. That negotiation, therefore, did not fail in consequence of the absence of anything which we had to offer in the shape of inducement. It failed on account of the rigid protectionist principles professed by a majority in the French Chambers.

From negotiation we come to retaliation. I suppose my noble friend Lord Selborne was under the impression last night that he was defending the principles of retaliation. In my judgment almost the whole of his speech, although he every now and then used a phrase about retaliation, might have been just as well made in defence of a policy of protection, or the policy proposed by Mr. Chamberlain. My noble friend used all the arguments which are so familiar in the mouths of protectionist speakers. He asserted that our country had prospered under protection and also that other countries had in recent years prospered more under protection than we had under free trade.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): I made no comparison as to the respective degrees of prosperity. I simply said that foreign countries had prospered greatly under protection.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I was under the impression that my noble friend used the words that other countries had prospered more in recent years under protection than we had prospered under free trade.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I said that their trade had progressed at a greater rate than ours.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I accept my noble friend's correction; but if that is his opinion why does he not boldly advocate a return to a system of protection in this country? It may be that protection is a very good system, and that other countries may have prospered under a protective system; but I do not think that my noble friend can point to any instance where a country has prospered under a system of negotiation and retaliation, or to any country whose fiscal system is based on a formula so unmeaning. But we are not to-night discussing protection. The object of this debate I take to be to endeavour to find out, what, if it is not protection, is the policy of His Majesty's Government. If we were to discuss the question of protection I should find it necessary to challenge most, if not all, of the statements and arguments that were contained in my noble friend's speech; and especially should I think it my duty to call attention to the fact that he based an argument as to the stagnation of our trade upon the exports of our manufactured articles only, and that he altogether omitted to make the slightest reference in the course of his speech—an omission which was somewhat remarkable on the part of the First Lord of the Admiralty—to the enormous progress which has been made under free trade by our shipping industries, by our shipbuilding and our foreign shipping trade.

As to retaliation, it seems to me everything depends upon the meaning which we are to attach to the word and as to the spirit in which it is to be used. There was a somewhat ominous sentence in the Prime Minister's pamphlet, in which he said that the only alternative that was left was—

> "To do to foreign nations what they always do to each other, and, instead of appealing to economic theories which they wholly disbelieve, to use fiscal inducement which they thoroughly understand."

If this means, as it seems to me, that we are to base our future fiscal policy on the model of foreign nations—upon what foreign nations do to each other—we can very easily form an opinion of what it comes to. If my noble friend Lord Lansdowne is to be free to present his big revolver at the head of every protectionist State which imposes protective duties against our exports, and to threaten, or to carry out a threat, of imposing similar duties upon their exports, we know very well what that would come to. We know that almost every nation of Europe and the United States of America attach far more importance to keeping control over their own markets than to opening our markets to themselves; and we know that all the fiscal inducements which they so thoroughly understand have never enabled them, if they have ever tried, to establish free trade between each other. If we are to model, as that sentence appears to indicate, our future fiscal policy upon what foreign nations do to each other, I cannot see what other result we can anticipate than the establishment of a system of protection all round.

The Government decline to discuss with us concrete cases. That is no reason why we should not put to them concrete cases of our own for the purpose of helping the country to see where this policy of retaliation may lead them. Lord Crewe referred last night to a suggestion which has been made that it might be possible in the case of Germany, for instance, by threatening to impose an additional tax upon her wines or upon the cheap toys that she exports, to obtain some concession on her part in our favour. It has also been suggested that in the case of France we might threaten to impose some duty upon her silks or fancy articles, and by that means obtain some concession from her. I admit that I am extremely doubtful whether the advantages which we could obtain from using such fiscal inducements as these would be very great. I can conceive that, if threats of this sort were made and carried out, it would certainly tend to dislocate a certain portion of our trade, and that it would infallibly diminish a certain portion of our exports which pay for those imports which would be thereby checked. But if, after full examination, His Majesty's Government had reason to suppose that by a threat or the imposition of duties of this kind there would be any probability of their obtaining larger and more important concessions in other directions, I should not have the slightest objection to seeing this experiment tried, to seeing it proposed to Parliament, and seeing on what grounds it could be defended. But let me instance another case of retaliation. I do not know that the proposal has ever been made in a more simple and naked form than it was made a short time ago in a newspaper which is a great supporter of His Majesty's Government and also of Mr. Chamberlain—*The Times* newspaper. *The Times* was discussing the question of our iron industry, and said—

> "By a hostile tariff America first shuts our iron out of her market and then invades our home markets and shuts up our manufactories. Would it really be no advantage to be able to retain our home market in spite of their tariff? We could do that by a retaliatory tax upon the iron of every country that taxes ours. Granting that we could obtain no power of negotiation that would open the American market to our own iron—"

It is not proposed that it should be done in order to secure greater freedom of exchange—

> "still to secure possession of our home market would immensely increase our power of competing with America in every foreign market open to both. All this is so elementary that no free-importer should spoil his case by directly contradicting it."

Well, this argument rather appeals to me. I happen to be considerably interested in the iron and steel industry as chairman of an iron and steel company, and I quite admit that it would be rather an attractive prospect to me to be relieved of American competition in our market and to be able thereby to charge higher prices to our customers at home. I have no doubt that if a tariff reformer were to go to Barrow-in-Furness and make the same suggestion to the workmen in our works they would see it in the same light as I do. But, in my opinion, Parliament has got to look a little further than the interests either of iron and steel companies, or even of the workmen engaged in this industry.

It is admitted that we cannot succeed in what we all desire to do—in opening the American market to our iron products; but, as a compensation, we are to be protected against competition in our own. Now the competition to which we are exposed is essentially of a temporary and fitful character; it is a competition of that kind which is now described as "dumping"; it is the occasional export by America or by Germany of a portion of their over-production which has been fostered by their protective tariffs, and by their trusts which have grown up under protective tariffs. A portion of that over-production is priced below the cost of manufacture. But that competition must in its nature be of a temporary character. In order to relieve us from that temporary inconvenience we are to be compensated by a permanent protective duty. It is not easy to see that our power of competing in neutral markets would be increased by the adoption of that proposal. If America or Germany want to "dump" they will "dump" somewhere. If they cannot "dump" here, they will be driven to "dumping" in neutral markets in which we compete with them.

What this tariff would do would be permanently to raise the price of our products to our home customers. Who are our home customers? Nobody that I am aware of buys iron or steel to look at or to put in his pocket. The purchasers of iron and steel are a thousand different classes of manufacturers who convert iron and steel into hundreds and thousands of articles of general utility and advantage. Well, if the price of their material is raised to them, they also must be protected—the price of the article which they produce will also be raised, their consumption will be necessarily reduced, and the effect of this proposal would be that production would be diminished, and that a large number of workmen in these subsidiary industries—a far larger number than are employed in the ironmasters' works—would have their employment by so much reduced. I think it is a fair question to put to His Majesty's Government whether the proposal which I have just described comes under the head of protection, or whether it comes under the head of retaliation. If the answer is that such a policy as has been recommended by *The Times* comes under the head of retaliation, I think the country will be in a better position to judge than it is now of the consequences which may follow the adoption of the policy which was so simply described to us in a couple of words.

There is one point on which I desire to say a word, which seems to me more important even than the discovery of the proposals of the Government itself. It is the relation of the Government to the Unionist organisations which largely control the policy indicated by the tariff reformers. What are we all looking to? We know we are all looking to the future general election, to the preparations to be made for that general election, and the results of that election. The Government are using the whole of their influence to ensure that the results of that election should be a mandate for a change of some kind or another in our present fiscal policy. This is their irreducible minimum, and unless a candidate is prepared to proclaim himself a fiscal reformer of one kind or another he is no longer permitted to be a loyal supporter of the Government. Sometimes they profess a mild preference for their own proposals over the more extreme proposals of the Tariff Reform League. Some of them do not conceal, however, their sympathy with the more extended proposals than their own; but in no case, so far as I am aware, is the influence of the Government exerted, or will it be exerted, to impose any limit whatever on the extent to which their supporters may legitimately commit themselves. I submit that this attitude on the part of the Government is unfair to many of their supporters who desire to give them a loyal support.

I think we have a right to ask that there should be a superior limit as well as an irreducible minimum. Some of us here, and some of those who in the other House voted for the Amendment moved the other day, have endeavoured to induce the Government to fix some such superior limit; but hitherto our endeavours have been without success. I believe and I trust that the whole of His Majesty's Government are not committed to a policy of undisguised preference, protective taxation of food, or to the imposition of an all-round duty. But what is the use of the protests which some of them have made if they take no steps to secure that their protests shall be effective? And unless they take some steps to prevent the return [to Parliament of candidates who are pledged to protection and preference, the responsibility of those members of the Government who are not prepared to go to these full lengths will not be, in my opinion, discharged if by their possible future resignations they decline a verdict on the part of the country which they have themselves been instrumental in obtaining and which by timely action on their part they might have averted.

There is only one hypothesis on which this attitude on their part can be justified. It is that in their judgment these questions are of minor importance as compared with the maintenance of the Unionist Party for other purposes—for purposes, I acknowledge, great and important, perhaps of resisting any revival of the Home Rule policy, of maintaining the principles of the Education Act, and, for all I know, there may be many others; but in comparison with these they hold that the most sweeping changes in our fiscal policy are matters of minor importance. I acknowledge that I am unable to hold this view, for I believe there is no subject which is the least likely to occupy the immediate or early attention of Parliament which compares in importance with that of the principles on which our fiscal policy is in the future to be based. In saying this I think I am taking a more consistent position than that which was taken by Lord Selborne last night. He reminded us that we were risking the existence of the great Unionist Party? But what are he and his friends doing? Are they doing nothing to risk the existence of the great Unionist Party? He has not even the excuse of thinking that these are great matters, for he told us that he considered that a wholly exaggerated importance was attached to the question both by the advocates and opponents of protection.

There are certain compensations for the absence of the Leader of the other House and for his place being occupied by Mr. Akers Douglas, who, speaking the other day, gave some novel definitions of the principles of Cabinet responsibility. He said—

> "The noble Lord wants to know whether hon. Members supporting the Sheffield policy and hon. Members supporting a more advanced policy will receive the same support from the Conservative associations. I say certainly, as long as they receive the support of their local associations, and my hon. friend the Secretary of the Treasury has observed that he certainly will make no difference with regard to the candidates who are standing now; but the condition must be that they are supported by the local associations, and that they necessarily support the policy of the Government. How else would hon. members have it?"

I think that is a very frank expression of the opinions of an important member of the Government on this part of the question. We know now who are to control the decision of the future fiscal policy of the Government. It is to be left to individual opinion and the action of the local associations. If by any process of wirepulling a sufficient number of local associations can be got to support the policy of the Tariff Reform League, then it is the policy of the Tariff Reform League only and not their own policy which will be submitted to the country at the next general election. I confess I am not content to leave the decision of this question in the hands of the local associations. Local associations are a necessary and important part of our political organisations; but local associations do not always, and frequently do not represent the opinions of the constituencies which they profess to represent.

I have been reproached with disloyalty to the Unionist Party for having advised free-traders to vote against protectionist candidates. I have given that advice. I have never advised any one to vote against candidates who were pledged to the policy of negotiation and retaliation—partly because, as I have already said, I do not know what that policy means. But I do advise every man who professes free-trade opinions, and does desire that freedom of exchange should not be diminished but increased, to exact from every candidate who seeks to represent him in Parliament a pledge that he will oppose protection in whatever shape it may re-appear—to exact a pledge from the candidates that they will vote against protection, and that they will oppose protective taxes on food, that they will oppose the imposition of a protective duty upon foreign manufactured goods; and I will advise that, failing this pledge, he will refuse to support a candidate even if he professes to be a supporter of a Unionist Government.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I believe I am only expressing the views of every one of my colleagues, that they regard the departure of the noble Duke as a great calamity, and I can hardly adequately express how his absence from our counsels is felt. The subject of the resignation of the noble Duke is one which I think may be fairly left to him. At least, as far as I am concerned, I absolutely refuse to discuss any part of that matter. I am sure that in the eyes of his countrymen the noble Duke has said and done nothing that is inconsistent with the highest tone of honour. Turning to the other part of the noble Duke's speech, I confess I am a little surprised at the complete innocence the noble Duke appears to display as to the mode in which political matters are managed in Cabinets. I should have thought the noble Duke's experience would have led him to speak less lightly of the opinions of local political associations. Another observation occurs to me upon the noble Duke's remark, that he had never heard of a policy that could be expressed in two words. Has he ever heard of Home Rule? No one has made a more effective stand than the noble Duke himself as to the necessity of distinguishing between the official acts, the official programme, of a Government and the individual opinions of the members of a Government: and until there is that official programme, and something which the Government as a Government is supporting, I should have thought there was no right to inquire into the individual opinions of different members of a Government. The noble Duke quoted a celebrated passage from a speech by Lord Macaulay, in which he pointed out that great and important issues before the country had been advocated by members of a Cabinet and denounced by other members of the same Cabinet. I do not know whether the noble Duke has altered his views since 15th June last. I am afraid I shall have to call the noble Duke's attention to observations he then made on the subject; but on this part of it I am a little surprised to find the noble Duke expressing his view that a member is open to have his expressed opinion challenged by his colleagues and a declaration made by the Government.

Before proceeding further, I wish to make a protest against the impression, which the noble Duke has acted upon for the last twenty minutes, that the House is discussing protection and free trade. That is a kind of trap into which speaker after speaker has fallen. They are not invited to fight that question, and those responsible for bringing the subject forward at Sheffield and elsewhere have over and over again repudiated the statement that it is necessary to take the part of free-trader or protectionist. I have my own views and will not, when necessary, hesitate to express them; but as a member of the Government, and responsible for what I say as representing my colleages, I have spoken no words in favour of protection, nor do I intend to do so to-night. I claim to have my views unchallenged until I say or do something for which the Government will be responsible. It is not a discussion upon any proposal of the Government, and when the noble Duke said he did not understand the measures suggested by the Prime Minister at the time of his resignation he could not have meant to convey that measures were actually suggested, for certainly they were not. Not now is there any specific proposal from the Government in question, but we are challenged by the noble Earl to say what we are going to do or say in the country. That is what it comes to; and, forsooth, His Majesty's Ministers are challenged on their views without respect to any specific measure capable of being discussed. It is one thing to speak of a policy of retaliation, or what, in other words, the noble Duke more accurately described as freedom to negotiate with other countries; but what is it? Who has given the right to challenge members of the Government upon what they are going to do, or what they are going to say, or what they are going to propose? What has been suggested is an inquiry, an inquiry among themselves to determine what they should propose to Parliament. That was what was suggested; and I think I may claim the authority of the noble Duke for considering this a reasonable and proper thing to do, and one would suppose that the natural result would be that, when a conclusion came to be arrived at as to what was the right thing to do, then a full discussion would proceed as to a general policy and its details. But here the House is discussing nothing in particular and speakers attribute anything they please as to possible proposals His

Majesty's Government may hereafter submit.

I observe that not only did the noble Earl who initiated this discussion suggest that a policy should be declared, but that the Government should be bound by a Resolution of the House as to the particular form which a proposal should take. It is a very remarkable thing as a matter of constitutional curiosity, and I think it should be handed down to the future as a precedent which ought to be avoided. On 15th June there was a discussion not very unlike others heard in the House when this subject is raised, and the noble Duke on that occasion used words in which, alluding to the line taken by noble Lords opposite that inquiry into the present system was not even permissible, he said they would—

> "Find themselves compelled, whether they liked it or not, to take their share in this grand inquest of the nation which was to be opened."

But from what the noble Duke has just said, it does not appear that his mind is so open as to whether there should be this grand inquest or not.

The Duke of DEVONSHIRE: I thought the inquiry had been concluded, and that the Government had arrived at a conclusion to reverse the fiscal policy of the last two generations.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: From what did the noble Duke infer that the inquiry was concluded?

The Duke of DEVONSHIRE: The decision.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: What decision? I have not heard of any decision to reverse the fiscal policy of the country. On the contrary, one of the most frequent complaints on both sides is that no decision has been announced. All through his observations to-night the noble Duke referred to free trade; but in the course of his former speech he very justly said we never had free trade, but only free imports. How the noble Duke can have come to the conclusion that the inquiry was concluded is one of those mysteries which I am not able to solve. I was under the impression, until the noble Duke spoke, that we were still piling up statistics, and were still engaged in "the grand inquest." What the noble Duke said in June was good common sense, and ought to be acted on—that a great evil undoubtedly exists, and that it ought to be remedied in some way or another. The noble Duke said with great force that the circumstances had completely changed, and that, instead of manufacturing as we had formerly done for the whole world, we were being surrounded by hostile tariffs. What was to be done was to inquire in what way that great evil could be remedied. Is it, or is it not, an evil that we are being shut out from every market in the world, and, if it is, are those charged with the Government of the country not under some obligation to endeavour to apply a remedy? And if there is no remedy but retaliation, what is the objection? At present, if we go to France or Germany and say, "Will you let our goods in free if we let your goods in free?" the answer we should receive from these countries would be, "Our goods go in free already. You have nothing to offer us. Why should we give you anything, when you have nothing to give us in return?" Whoever heard of a bargain in which one partner began by saying, "I have nothing to give you; please give me something?"

It is not unnatural that the Government should endeavour in some way to get rid of the evil inflicted on this country and its commerce by high tariffs. But it is said retaliation would be ineffectual, that it would lead either to a tariff war, which would be injurious to both parties, or to the duties put on being made perpetual, and thus protection would be introduced. I admit that a commercial war may be injurious; but if it were known that we would go into commercial warfare with a weapon that we could use, our antagonists would be a little chary of challenging us by raising their tariffs. The objection to the present system is that every country may bring its goods to our shores and seriously injure our industries by underselling us, and we have no power to resist them. That injury is being done cannot be denied. But it is said we must take a wider view. I agree that we must not confine our view to one industry, but must look to the prosperity and interest of the whole country. But, on the other hand, we must remember that the whole country is made up of its different parts. How many of its industries may be destroyed with impunity? It is interesting to observe the different forms in which the attack on the Government has been made; and until the Government themselves determine on which line of defence they will place themselves, I suppose they may be justly abused by both sides—by those who complain that Ministers are not sufficiently protectionists and by those who assert that their policy would lead to the taxation of food.

The Government should be judged by their professions. They have put forward no concrete policy. All that is before the country is the Prime Minister's statement that he is prepared to reverse the policy that no duty could ever be imposed except for the purposes of revenue. If there is an evil to be met, is it right to take the leading principle of the Sheffield speech and of the pamphlet—and there is, I assert, no difference between the the private paper and the pamphlet in this respect? The principle is that the country has a right to say to other countries, "Unless your fiscal system is so altered that our goods may get into your markets, we shall refuse to let your goods into our markets." All that is claimed is that that liberty should exist. The form in which and the extent to which that should be done are necessarily matters of detail. But that that should be the leading principle is all the Prime Minister has ever said.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I fully share the opinion which has been expressed by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, that the Question on the Paper is a very narrow one. I also agree with him that there has been considerable digression during the debate, but that digression is quite natural, and I do not think that any member of His Majesty's Government will complain either that inquiries have been made or that digression has occurred. I am sure there are many in this House who would wish to offer to His Majesty's Government their congratulation upon the two recruits they have obtained on the Front Bench. The speech of the noble Marquess Lord Salisbury and of the noble Earl Lord Donoughmore were speeches of good qualities, and I think the Government may be congratulated on obtaining such recruits. My Lords, I have been accustomed for years to treat everything which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack says with great respect, and I do so now; but he has propounded a doctrine which has fallen on my ears with strange sound. The Government claim the right to appeal to the country to-morrow, or any day, for a mandate of the greatest importance; yet, when details are asked for, my noble and learned friend replies, "What right have you to make any inquiry as to what that mandate is to be for?" I contend that, if the fullest information on the subject is not obtained in Parliament, the country will have actually placed before it the nature of the mandate at twenty-four hours notice, and they will have to determine upon it in ignorance. That is not the way to obtain the genuine opinion of the country on any great question.

The noble and learned Earl, referring to the observation of the noble Duke as to his inability to understand the meaning of a policy which was represented by two words, quoted the case of Home Rule. Of course, the meaning of those two words was clearly understood, for Irish politicians had been for years explaining to the country what Home Rule was; and Mr. Gladstone never consulted the country on Home Rule until he had introduced the Bill of 1886 with all its details Not till then did he ask the country to express its opinion. No one, I think, ought to deny to Parliament the right of investigation as to the nature of the mandate to be asked for by, and as to the policy of, His Majesty's Government. The speech of the Marquess of Salisbury was satisfactory so far as it went. He said the policy of the Government was that of supporting free trade. He went on to say that protection threw a burden on the consumer and gave a benefit to the producer. That is very satisfactory. But he was only playing the part which Mr. Gerald Balfour played in the other House of Parliament. We afterwards had the remarkable speech delivered by Lord Selborne. I am sure the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty knows that it is impossible for me to say a discourteous word in regard to him.

But the noble Earl seemed to be suffering from a suppressed attack of protection. Let us see what my noble friend said. He raised a question which is important from many points of view, because it is a purely protectionist point of view. Having had a great deal to do with the Unionist Party both on its platforms and in regard to its policy, I wish to ask my noble friend to consider the effect of his words upon the fortunes of the Unionist Party. He has stated that in the protectionist period, ten or fifteen years before free trade, this country existed in a state of prosperity. Well, the people who were interested in the prosperity of this country will be surprised to hear that His Majesty's Government regard the state of things existing before free trade as a prosperous state of things.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I must be allowed to state my point in my own way. The noble Duke had stated that there was no period of prosperity before the repeal of the Corn Laws, and I pointed out that it was prosperous according to the opinion of the period. I pointed out that prosperity was a comparative term, and the standard of comparison was the experience of the world at the given moment, and I proved from contemporary records that in the opinion of that time, before the repeal of the Corn Laws, the period had been considered a prosperous one.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: That is exactly what I am traversing. No doubt, after the French War this country recuperated, and our manufactures flourished. Steamships were built, and from the capitalists' point of view there was no doubt an increased prosperity, but that was not the prosperity of the country. May I say that if my noble friend had lived as long as I have he would not have said that that period was a prosperous one. I can recollect when those who looked out at night saw the fires burning from the agricultural homesteads, when reports came in of the breaking up of machinery, when lawless men scoured the country and raided the inns. The miners of Wales were marching on Newport, and I remember standing by the main road to learn whether the Queen's mail coach had been captured by those rebels. Our gaols were full, and men were being tried for sedition and treason. All this did not proceed from political disaffection and wrong, or from bad laws, but it proceeded from one cause alone, and it was that men were starving and wanted food, and had to fight in defence of their very lives; and they had to break the law in order to make their grievances known. Many of your Lordships may have seen a graphic account of the state of the country during the time which my noble friend Lord Selborne says was a prosperous time. That account says that the whole of the labourers in the agricultural districts were on the verge of starvation; that the poor rates were 20s. in the pound; that the large towns were like beleaguered cities, so dreadful was the destitution and misery which prevailed in them; that people walked the streets like gaunt shadows, and not like human beings; that bread was so dear that few were able to buy it, and we were on the verge of a revolution when the Corn Laws were repealed. Then is given the anecdote about the pinch of curry powder. That was the description given by an accurate and truthful historian of events, for that is the record of Mr. Chamberlain himself. I am not seeking to introduce anything in the way of a taunt to my right hon. friend, but this description represents history, and I take it that this description is true, yet my noble friend says those were prosperous times. People at that time may have looked to the capitalists of the country, and thought that if the capitalists were prosperous the country was prosperous. They are now looking towards the Tariff Commission, and saying that this country is prosperous, but they do not go into the cottages of the people and learn for themselves the suffering that comes from the want of food. My noble friend Lord Selborne said if there had been any amelioration of that state of things it did not result from free trade.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I said free imports.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Yes; imports and free food coming in untaxed.

Your Lordships will remember that the agitation for free trade commenced in the year 1849, and in the year 1852 the Government of Lord Derby was formed, and at the end of that year free trade had only been in operation some three years. A question arose, on the Motion of Mr. Charles Villiers, whether free trade was a doctrine that ought to be supported, and a discussion took place in December, 1853, as to what should be the opinion of the House on that subject. At that time Mr. Disraeli, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was the Leader of the House, and he then expressed a wish that the Resolution proposed and the question it raised should be definitely cleared up, and in the course of that discussion, which was rather conversational, Mr. Disraeli said—

> "Under these circumstances we endeavoured to draw up a distinct Resolution which we considered would conciliate your opinion to such a degree that we hoped it would be accepted. I have not the Resolution at hand, but I sufficiently recollect it to know that it most unquestionably declared the opinion that the welfare of the working classes was attributable to the cheapness of provisions occasioned by recent legislation."

That was the opinion of Lord Derby's Cabinet, and Mr. Disraeli was willing to bring forward that Amendment expressly in the terms which I have mentioned, stating that it was the opinion of the House that the amelioration of the working classes had been affected by means of free imports, and that it was in consequence of the cheapness of food, resulting from that legislation, that the working classes had had their position altered for the better. It turns out that whilst now there are members of the present Government saying that such is not the case, the colleagues of Lord Derby, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Walpole, Sir J. Pakington, and every member of the Government of 1852, went into the Lobby and voted that such had been the result of free trade in ameliorating the condition of the working classes, and congratulating the country that the previous state of things had been changed. Not only the Government, but 486 Members of the House of Commons, voted that such was the result in 1852, and now it is left to the year 1904 for us to be told that such was not the case, and that there was no improvement for the working classes of this country through free trade. May I mention, in passing, that I think we are to be congratulated upon the fact that one Member of your Lordships' House, most highly regarded, most highly venerated, still remains amongst us, who was a member of that Cabinet, and if he were here to-night—I allude to the Lord John Manners of 1852—I think he would readily confirm that, protectionist as he was, he voted in favour of that declaration, and also, if he had been present to-night, he might have told us how it was that he voted for such a Resolution. I hope that this statement of my noble friend has now been pretty well disposed of, and I hope he will believe Mr. Chamberlain if he does not believe me. He has now got the statement on this point of the old protectionist Party, and I ask him to listen to such evidence and not rely upon persons less worthy of credence.

Perhaps I may anticipate for a moment what we shall have to deal with. There is one delivered statement which I am sure will affect public opinion to a great extent. The Lord Chancellor says that we have no right to ask the Government what their opinions are individually. I know I have no right to do that, but after his speech I am inclined to suspect them, and I think that my suspicions are well founded. We know the opinion of many members of the Government. Without breaking the canons of privacy, we know pretty well what the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are. I think I have a suspicion, from what my right hon. friend Mr. Alfred Lyttelton has said, what he means. You may call his opinions pious opinions if you like, but still they are his opinions, and the Lord Chancellor cannot object to my stating that Mr. Lyttelton has told us that we cannot put preferential tariffs on one side. My noble friend Lord Selborne says that the Government are free-traders, and he says they will not ban preferential tariffs. I suppose that means they will not oppose them. Is that the policy of the Government? When these views are placed before the country we wish to know what the policy of the Government is in regard to them; but when we hear Ministers in the House of Commons telling us that they are in favour of these protectionist views, then we are told by the Lord Chancellor that we have no right to inquire what the views of the Government are individually. Have the governed no right to know the opinions of those who govern? Is it possible to hear these individual opinions and for us to be satisfied while the Government say "We will some time or other tell you what our opinions are?" I would ask my noble friend on the Woolsack to say whether the Government will tell us this after the next general election or before it. We must have some statement on this question. The people of this country are not constitutional lawyers, and if you are going to ask them to vote some time or other you must tell them what they are going to vote upon. It is no good telling them after they have voted. It may be negotiation and retaliation, and if it is, then you would have their banners inscribed with those words, and you would tell the farmer and agricultural labourer "That is sufficient for you, and we will not tell you any more." I feel seriously in regard to the fortunes of the Unionist Party, and I say that such strategy is placing the Unionist Party in very great peril. If you tell the farmer that your policy is retaliation he will ask you what it is you are going to retaliate upon. He will ask whether it is upon agricultural implements or the chemicals he uses upon the land. My noble friend says, "We are not going to tell you, but we shall leave it to the new Parliament and they will tell you." I assure my noble friend that the Unionist Party will stand in great peril in consequence of this state of things. You are practically telling the agricultural labourer, "You are to have this great policy of retaliation and negotiation and what more can you want?" He will ask you, what are you going to tax for retaliation? I think in this way you come down to a very low level and a very commonplace level, but it is a very practical level and you cannot avoid being placed in such a position.

May I ask my noble friend the Secretary for Foreign Affairs if he speaks to-night to answer one or two questions. In the first place I want to ask what is the mandate that he expects from the country. I suppose he will accept the view of my noble friend on the Woolsack and he will say, "I shall tell the electors they will vote for retaliation and negotiation." I suppose I must take that answer. Now let me ask my noble friend how is he going to take the opinion of the country upon negotiation and retaliation? How are you going to obtain your vote upon that mandate? How are you going to separate it from the rest of the proposals in your programme? Suppose you are placed between a free-trader and a supporter of Mr. Chamberlain—how are you going to get a vote for the Government under those circumstances upon retaliation and negotiation? There will be men who will not attach importance to their vote upon that question, but they will desire to vote upon education and Chinese labour, and all those subjects that engage the attention of the public, and how can you separate that question from all the other questions which will confront the elector? There is one way you can do this, and it is for the Government to frankly place their propositions before Parliament and before the country, and then you can place them properly before the electors. When I contested my first election in 1868 there was one question before the public, and this course was taken through the statesmanship of a man who knew the necessity for obtaining mandates. In the year 1868 Mr. Gladstone brought forward certain Resolutions in the House of Commons declaring the necessity of disestablishing the Irish Church, and he stated precisely the manner in which it was to take place, and every Liberal candidate had that question in his mind, and at every meeting I read this and used it, and I obtained my majority by virtue of being able to tell the people what it was the Prime Minister required. But we have not got anything like that now, for here you are mixing up this question with the general policy of the Government. If you take that course the demand of the Government will be driven into the background. It will be Mr. Chamberlain's policy that we shall have to fight, and this Government, asking for a mandate so obtained, will have no proof that the people have ever expressed an opinion upon that question. My noble friend is the Foreign Secretary, and he will have to deal with this question of retaliation. If the election is carried on in this manner, how will my noble friend be able to say to Foreign Ministers that the people of this country have declared in favour of retaliation. The natural reply will be, "You have not found out the opinion of the people of your country, and even if there is a majority in favour of the Government it is not a majority in favour of retaliation, because three-fourths of the electors may support Mr. Chamberlain. And my noble friend will have no power of negotiation if the Government will not be more explicit to show that the opinion of the electors has been declared. Does my noble friend know yet if the Government have formulated anything in the shape of retaliation? Has it been thought over what my noble friend is going to say to each particular country? Has he ascertained what he will say to Russia, or what he is going to tax? We have a positive promise that there shall be no taxation of food, and in the face of that, what can be said to Russia or America, which are the two countries whose imports you wish most to shut out. I fancy that when my noble friend comes to threaten, it will be a practice contrary to his nature, and he will not be able to threaten without knowing he is going to act. If my noble friend takes that course, he will ponder long before he will advise this country to enter into a war of retaliation.

There is another question I wish to ask. It is rather unfortunate that this debate was not postponed for a few days, in order that every Member of this House might have read this Blue-book, which contains an account of retaliation and tariff wars. I should like my noble friend's opinion as to the results of those destructive wars which have taken place, and which are discussed in this Blue-book. Probably none of your Lordships have had time to peruse the contents of this Blue-book, but you must have had time to learn the destruction to the trade of Italy and France. Take the relative proportion of our commerce, and apply the same measure of destruction to our commerce that occurred in Italy, France, and Switzerland, and what can compensate us for the utter destruction to trade that would take place whilst that loss existed, and during the long time which would occur before that loss was made good. The opinion of my noble friend upon that record condemning the policy of retaliation with the strength which is contained in that Blue-book will be of the greatest value to the House, and I am sure that my noble friend will give us the assistance of his advice frankly and completely.

There are only one or two more matters that I feel I ought to detain your Lordships with. This Resolution that is suggested is a very simple one. We ask simply that the control of Parliament shall be maintained to the fullest. I do not understand what my noble friend's reason is for saying that this Resolution was framed so as to control future Parliaments, for there is no power to control future Parliaments. This is an expression of opinion of this Parliament. One Parliament cannot control another, and therefore the Amendment that has been proposed on the part of the Government does not carry us one step further, and it is not an Amendment that anybody can attach any importance to. I do not see how any one can object to the Motion of Lord Crewe. The Government could not object to it; and so, to give the House an opportunity of voting upon something else, this Amendment was put in. No one wants to bind future Parliaments, and the Government must not be taken to be opposing Lord Crewe's Motion by virtue of this Amendment, because it means nothing. My noble friend Lord Selborne last night informed us Unionists that we stood in great peril, and he warned us that we were taking a part in public affairs which may cause us to be associated with men with whom we differ. Well, my Lords, I will take that warning to heart. I have no wish to leave the Unionist Party, but I have to ask my noble friend and his colleagues to save us from becoming a protectionist Party. If you are going to allow us to drift into the position of being a protectionist Party, we, believing that such policy will be fatal to the cause of Unionism, refuse to listen to an appeal which asks us to strike a blow against the principles to which we are devoted. You say it is important that a particular kind of fiscal policy other than free trade should exist. We claim that free trade is a necessity of the greatness of this Empire throughout and we cannot yield or forego it in order to bring success to any Party upon issues of secondary importance. I know that we are told that we are loyally to consider the claims of Party and I admit the obligation. There is, however, one duty which to me is higher than Party, and that is duty that I owe to my neighbour. I have for some years lived in an agricultural district where wages are of the lowest and I know something of what takes place in the homes of these who toil, and I have learned from observation that there is no margin between the receipts of these men and the expenditure they have to incur. Therefore I cannot and will not bring myself to add one farthing to the burdens of these men struggling day after day to keep off poverty from their houses and to find sufficient for those who have claims upon them. When we consider the burdens that are to be cast upon these people we are told that we should think Imperially. The best way to think Imperially is to let our minds dwell upon the foundation and the bed-rock of Empire. Our Empire rests above all things upon the contentment of its people. Our Empire throughout the world must look for its strength and foundation to the contentment and loyalty of the people of these islands. Will you be acting wisely in the interests of that Empire which makes an appeal to you, by doing anything to check the contentment and loyalty of the people by an unjust and class law?

LORD BURGHCLERE: I do not rise for the purpose of answering the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down, for I am in accord with his stalwart profession of free trade, and I listened to his able discourse with an admiration which, I am sure, will be shared by all his fellow-countrymen who read it when it is reported in the papers to-morrow. But my Lords, there have been other speeches in this debate, and I am put somewhat in a difficulty about them, because they have already been answered by previous speakers better than I could have answered them myself. I must say that I was deeply disappointed by the speech of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. The object of my noble friend Lord Crewe's Amendment is to endeavour to extract from the Government what their policy is and what it means. There has been no doubt some very great difficulty in the country, for some time past, arising from our failure to get an understanding on this subject. There has been a debate in the House of Commons during the last week, but I do not think we learned very much from it. There were speeches by members of the Cabinet last night and still we are in doubt as to their meaning, and I did hope that when the noble Lord rose from the Woolsack he would have, in common parlance, cleared the air. I may be denser than other people, but I am bound to say that the way the noble Lord cleared the air reminded me of one of our fogs in the atmosphere of London on a day in November. The noble Lord on the Woolsack said that we ought not to challenge the Government as to what they are going to say. No, my Lords, we do not challenge them on what they are going to say, but we challenge them on what they have already said. I am bound to say that they have spoken both in the country and in Parliament with very different voices. Last night we were privileged to listen to two members of His Majesty's Government. One was the noble Marquess opposite, and if he will allow me I will venture, as an old colleague of his in the House of Commons, to congratulate him upon his appearance in this House and upon his speech. If I might be allowed to express my opinion as to these two speeches I should venture to say that the speech of my noble friend Lord Selborne was that of a good protectionist struggling with the disadvantages of free trade, and the speech of Lord Salisbury was that of a good free-trader struggling with the disadvantages of protection. On one thing they were both agreed at any rate, and that is that however great the disadvantages of protection or free trade might be, after all, they were quite willing to sink their differences in order to present a common front to the common foe. My noble friend Lord James has referred to certain portions of the noble Earl's speech, and I am bound to say that I shared last night the same impression as he seemed to share as to the meaning of my noble friend's words. It appears to me that the noble Earl seemed to rejoice in his recollection of the halcyon days that preceded the repeal of the Corn Laws, and he told us that the state of the country was of a most prosperous description at that time. I have not the slightest doubt that the state of England was very prosperous at that time. We were then, as we are now, the greatest commercial nation in the world. It was not a very long time before 1846 that we were called "a nation of shopkeepers," and I expect that was applied to us as much out of jealousy of our prosperity as a sort of innuendo against our manners. The noble Lord mentioned the name of Sir Robert Peel, and he told us that one of the reasons why Sir Robert Peel changed his opinions and adopted free trade was that from the height of prosperity that existed in this country before 1846 he saw a glimmering of that depression which was about to fall upon this country, and he gave that as one of the reasons why Sir Robert Peel adopted free trade. I think with my noble friend Lord James that one of the reasons why Sir Robert Peel adopted free trade was on account of the state of poverty existing among the labouring classes in this country at that period, and I felt inclined, while the noble Earl was speaking, to read to him, if it had been within the Rules of the House, across the Table, the words Sir Robert Peel used when he resigned office. He spoke of the goodwill existing in the abodes of those whose lot it was to labour when they recruited their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food. Anybody who could remember the days of poverty, distress, and starvation amongst the labouring classes, the burning of ricks, and the bread riots at that time must see that, if the rich at that time were richer, certainly the poor classes then were poorer and more miserable than they are now.

I have not risen to refer to the *pros* and *cons* of this high fiscal debate which has agitated the country since Mr. Chamberlain first declared war on free trade in May last. I do not rise to do so, because already in this House high authorities have delivered themselves on that subject with infinitely greater ability than I can claim to possess. I have another reason for not doing so, and that is that during the last six months it has been my lot, as it has been the lot of a great many others, to take an interest in politics, to expand every argument which I have on the subject, on many platforms in many parts of the country, and I was fearful, my Lords, lest I should be betrayed into repeating to your Lordships some of those rhetorical efforts, and when I tell you that the shortest of them takes something like one hour and a half to deliver, I am sure I shall have the agreement of your Lordships on the present occasion when I say that I do not intend to make any such effort here. There is, however, one exception I should like to be permitted to dwell upon. I should like to speak upon agriculture and how it has been affected by the policy of the Government, and if I may be permitted to do so without being corrected by the Lord Chancellor I should like to say how agriculture would be affected by the alternative policy of Mr. Chamberlain, because I observe that very many members of His Majesty's Government seem to endorse and approve the views of Mr. Chamberlain, although they do not approve of the means by which he is going to bring them about. My noble friend Lord Crewe alluded last night in the too short references, if I may say so, to the subject of agriculture as it refers to the Government position. It has often been a wonder to me since I have had the honour of a seat in your Lordships' House that so comparatively few debates on agricultural subjects are initiated in this House. Surely if there ever was an Assembly more interested in agriculture than another, it is the House of Lords. We have amongst us many landowners and many practical farmers, and we have also those who are well acquainted with practical farmers. It is perfectly true that up to the present moment we have no agricultural labourers here, but at any rate we have on both sides of the House noble Earls who have taken a deep interest in allotments and small holdings which deeply affect that large labouring class which I may be permitted to call the third estate of the agricultural community. I may say, moreover, that in endeavouring, as far as possible, to ascertain how the policy of the Government affects the question of agriculture, although I am, as your Lordships are well aware, a most convinced free-trader, I have endeavoured to approach the subject simply from the view of one who is anxious to ascertain whether in the policy of the Government or in the policy of Mr. Chamberlain there can be any benefit conferred upon agriculture, or whether, on the contrary, those policies will do injury to the agricultural classes. The position of agriculture, though it may be a little better during the last year or two, is not in the position that agriculturists would like to see, and I am quite sure that your Lordships will admit that fact. Landlords have, during the last fifteen or twenty years, lost large sums of capital which I am sorry to say there is no chance of them ever recovering. Farmers have lost capital and they have left their farms and been replaced by other farmers who, I am afraid, have not so much of that desirable capital as their predecessors. The only class which seems to me to have prospered during the last twenty-five years is the large class of agricultural labourers, the purchasing power of whose wages is higher, and who are in a general sense infinitely better off than they were before the Corn Laws were removed. Now I should like to say on my own behalf that having given the schemes of the Government as far as I can understand them—and I am bound to say that they are somewhat misty as regards the official programme of the Government—fair consideration, and having given the schemes of Mr. Chamberlain, as far as I can give them, full consideration, I have deliberately come to the conclusion that neither one nor the other will in any way benefit agriculture at all. On the contrary, I think there is very considerable danger that they will do agriculture a great deal of harm.

With your Lordships' permission I will first of all take what I would call the authorised programme of the Government, and then I will take, I will not call it the unauthorised but the semi-authorised programme of Mr. Chamberlain. The authorised programme of the Government, as we understand it, is negotiation and retaliation, of which two retaliation is the one, I suppose, which is the most effective. Now how will retaliation affect agriculture? That is a question which I think agriculturists may very well put to themselves. We have had an authoritative statement in another place by the Home Secretary, speaking, I suppose, with the consent of the Prime Minister and with the assent of his colleagues in the Cabinet, and what did Mr. Akers Douglas say as to the meaning of what the Government policy was. He said—

> "We are anxious to see a reduction in those hostile tariffs which have been injurious to the trade and commerce of the country.

What hostile tariffs have been injurious to the trade and commerce of the country? I do not gather much from the Government on that point. There is some illuminative light thrown upon it by the speeches of the late Colonial Secretary, and if I understand him aright then nearly every trade and industry is injured at the present moment by the hostile tariffs, and if Mr. Akers Douglas has truly stated the policy of the Government there is no trade and industry which may not be affected by retaliation and against which hostile tariffs may not be placed. Yes, there is one industry, and that we learn is the industry of agriculture. Nothing is to be done for agriculture, which Mr. Chamberlain has also told us in one of his speeches has practically been destroyed by free trade. I say deliberately that the Government do not intend to do anything for agriculture whilst they protect the rest of the trade of this country, because Mr. Akers Douglas on the same occasion said the Government were opposed to any duty on food, foreign wheat, or other agricultural produce. In that case what would be the position of agriculture. Every other trade, every necessity of their life, all their machinery, every one of their comforts and necessities may be taxed, and heavily taxed, and they will have to pay more for them whilst their own agricultural industry will not be benefited in the slightest degree. If this policy is carried out the last stage of agriculture will be infinitely worse than the first. For my part, if I had to choose between the two as an agriculturist, I think that the scheme of Mr. Chamberlain is infinitely less deleterious to the agricultural interest than the authorised programme of the Government.

I should like to turn for a moment to the effect that Mr. Chamberlain's scheme would have on agriculture, and I do so because we are told by the Government that if the next election goes in that direction they, at least, have not excluded it from their programme. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals seem to me, if he really wished to introduce protection as a statesman, to have failed to grapple the very crux of the effect of imposing protection in this country. France, Germany, and the United States exist under different conditions, but in this over-populated highly commercial country it seems to me that Mr. Chamberlain has not dealt with the crux of the question, which is how you are to reconcile the rival claims of agriculture on the one hand with the claims of commerce on the other. That seems to me to be the real question which has never been dealt with, faced, or settled by any of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches. Your Lordships are aware what great protagonists of agriculture, like Mr. Chaplin, put forward. They say that large tracts of land have gone over to pasture which formerly grew wheat, and their idea is that those tracts should once again be transformed into wheat-growing land. How does Mr. Chamberlain's scheme affect them? He proposes to put a 2s. duty on corn. I ask any farmer or landowner who has a practical knowledge of farming whether a 2s. duty on corn would turn over those pasture lands to growing wheat rivalling the virgin soil of Canada and other countries abroad? We all know that it would require a 10s. duty or a 15s. duty before that millennium could be brought about. But if a 10s. duty or a 15s. duty on corn is the only protection you can give to the farmer what will the artisans say about it in the great centres of industry? Their cost for food will be raised to a point which will set the commercial against the agricultural interest, and you will either leave the agricultural interest worse than it was before or you will make the commercial interest rebel against the imposition of duties upon corn just as it did before 1842 and 1846.

If I may for one moment more detain your Lordships on this subject, I would like to take the case of preferential tariffs supposing they are admitted. I do so without any apology because I have a sort of suspicion that my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty and the President of the Board of Agriculture have at least a pious opinion about preferential tariffs with regard to the Colonies. How would preferential tariffs affect the industry of agriculture? I say that they would be the very worst enemy agriculture could have. What would be the object of them? To check the import of corn from the United States who send us most of our corn, and to stimulate the growth of wheat in the north-west province of Canada where everybody knows there are large tracts of virgin soil which only require labour in order to grow enough wheat to supply this country, and perhaps a large portion of the world. As regards labour that is going to the north-west province of Canada. I asked the President of the Board of Agriculture a question some time ago about emigration from America into the north-west province of Canada, and he minimised the figures I put forward; but if at the present moment he were speaking he would not so minimise the vast amount of emigration from the United States which is increasing every day. What has happened in the meantime in this country? Farmers have been obliged to adapt themselves to the agricultural circumstances of the day. They have done so at great expense to themselves through times of trial and stress. They have adapted themselves to the circumstances of the day. What happens if you check the influx of wheat from the United States. It cannot be done in a day. During the period when the wheat is not coming from Canada farmers and landowners at home may be tempted by the high price of wheat to break up those pastures and revert to the old practice of wheat growing, and then perhaps the north-west province of Canada will by that time be more fully developed, and they will be able to flood our markets with wheat. Again I say that the last state of the farmer will be worse than the first. Incidentally, a very curious thing might happen with regard to preferential tariffs. We had an animated, or, at any rate, an energetic, debate in 1896 about a Bill which was brought in, in order to bring about the slaughter of all cattle at the ports, and the question at issue was whether the Canadian store cattle were to be kept out. If you are going to have preferential tariffs with the Colonies the first thing you will have to do with Canada will be to revoke that Bill, which I think was very strongly fought for by landowners and others in this House.

I have only one other point, and I fear I have detained your Lordships far too long. I wish to refer to the policy upon which the Government are going to the country. This has been referred to by other speakers, and it is the only remaining question with which I wish to deal. That policy, if I understand it aright, has been practically laid down by the Home Secretary in another place with the authority of his colleagues and the Prime Minister, and that policy consists of three things—namely, negotiation and retaliation, no preferential tariffs, and no taxes on raw material or food. That I understand from Mr. Akers Douglas to be the official policy of the Government. Unless I am corrected by some member of the Government I presume I am right, judging from Mr. Akers Douglas' speech, in saying that the whole of that policy is governed by another phrase which he used later on, because he said that the Government were prepared to keep their pledges until the electorate pronounced upon them. What we want to know is not what the Government are going to say after the next general election, but what they are going to say before the election, in order that the country may have a fair issue placed before it; and if this is not done I venture to say, with all submission, that the Government policy is not fair to the candidates in the constituencies, it is not fair to the electorate, and it is not fair to the nation, and you cannot possibly get a true and proper verdict upon which to decide when the general election is over. If I understand the position of the Government aright it is, "We are going to the country on retaliation and negotiation, and we do not include in our programme preferential tariffs or taxes on food." You go to the country with that proposition, and you say if the country should say "No" to it and wish to go further you will go for Mr. Chamberlain's programme. But you have never said that you accept his programme. I repeat that that is not fair to the candidates, the electorate, nor the nation. Having had some experience of contested elections during the last twenty years I will venture to give an illustration and a concrete instance of what I mean, in which I think I shall be able to show that under these circumstances the Government may very probably, and almost certainly in some instances, not get the true verdict of the nation, though they think they do. It is well known to everybody who has had anything to do with electioneering that many candidates come down to constituencies and advocate more advanced principles than their official leaders in London. The electors say, "He is a good Conservative (or Liberal as the case may be): he is a young man who advocates different opinions, but if we return him to Westminster it will be all right, for we know what the official policy of the Government is and they will keep him in order." But if the candidate goes down to represent Mr. Chamberlain's policy, and he is supported by the official organisations in London and receives letters from distinguished statesmen using such mystic phrases as, "Vote for this candidate and fiscal reform," which may mean anything from repealing the income-tax to a 20s. duty on corn, the good Conservative elector will say, "I will vote for this man although he is a protectionist," and then the Government will claim that the country has voted protectionist, and many voters—enough to turn the election—will have voted for such candidates because you have told them that the official policy of the Government is free trade and not protection, while at the same time you will declare the result to be that the country has pronounced in favour of protection. I venture to say that that is not a fair issue to put before the country. What we want to get is not this shibboleth of a policy, we want to get at what are the convictions of the Government. We want to know what their views are upon these great fiscal questions which have been put before the country; what their real mind is with regard to imports and exports; and whether the foreigner does absolutely pay the duty or not. We want to know when a man has saved money and invested it abroad and his interest comes back in imports and increased wealth to this country whether they think such a position as that places the country on the direct road to financial ruin. If the Government would tell us what their convictions are we should understand what their shibboleth of a policy is. They have had plenty of time to make up their mind. They have had plenty of pabulum to fill their intellects. They have had Blue-books full of interesting figures, and a succession of speeches, books, pamphlets, and other information such as probably never occurred before, since 1842 or 1846; and I venture to say that if the Government have not been able to arrive at any opinion upon this subject by this time they are about the only sixteen or seventeen men in the whole Empire who have not done so. I thank your Lordships for having listened to what I have had to say on these various matters, and I say without fear of contradiction before I sit down, that the country has a right to ask for guidance in this great and important question from His Majesty's Government and from the leaders of a great Party, and if they are not in a position to give us guidance on this subject then their policy will go down to posterity as a policy of unsettled and divergent opinions tempered by opportunism.

LORD FARRER: I rise to support this Motion because I believe it to be impossible to distinguish between retaliation and protection. What does "retaliation" mean? When I am in a difficulty I go to that great authority Dr. Johnson, and I look out what the word means. In this case I have looked it up and I find that it means "requite" or "revenge." I venture to say that revenge is hardly a policy suitable in matters of trade. I have heard a great deal lately about thinking Imperially. It appears to me that it is much more necessary to think accurately, and if we do this, I think we must consider what is the effect of retaliation when applied in practice? It appears to me that retaliation must be either for a short time or for a very long time. If it is for a long time it cannot by anybody be said to differ in any respect from protection. If it is for a short time, then I venture to say that you are put into the most difficult position possible when you come to take that protection off, for you have encouraged industries—and it is a well-known fact that such has been the case in the United States of America—which you are injuring enormously when you take it off. I do not suppose that even Gentlemen who advocate this new policy will propose that compensation should be given to such persons, although I think it is actually going to be proposed to compensate people who hold a public-house licence for one year only. Therefore I do not know what may be the opinion of people who hold such views. But there is another and a more interesting reason for supposing that retaliation is a very dangerous policy. I think it has hardly been noticed in this debate that we have had in this country experience of retaliation before. I venture to say that very few people have read the debates which occurred in 1844, when for twenty-five years this very weapon had been tried in every possible way. I think if the Gentlemen sitting on the opposite Benches, and whose opinions upon this question are not settled, would read those debates, they would see how retaliation and even prohibition had been tried with absolutely no success for twenty-five years. They would then, I think, greatly modify the opinions which they hold at present. I have been looking at the speeches of that date and I find that Mr. Ricardo, Earl Grey, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Villiers, and Mr. Cobden all supported free imports on the very ground that for twenty-five years previously that weapon of retaliation had been tried and had been found to be completely useless. I am rather surprised that we have heard so little about the history of retaliation from that period. It was tried, I believe, in the case of Brazil, Portugal, Spain, and France, and in all cases it resulted in enormous increases in the tariffs of both nations. I suppose statesmen who sit on the opposite Benches are possibly greater statesmen than those of the day of Sir Robert Peel and Lord Palmerston, but I venture to say that they have not had the experience of this weapon for twenty-five years like those statesmen had. I think it is well to remember what Lord Palmerston said on that occasion in regard to the weapon of retaliation. He compared it to a bridge with one toll-gate upon it, and he said it was hardly sensible when they had to go across to add another toll-gate on your own side. I cannot help thinking that the history of those days has been too little considered. I believe I am right in saying that retaliation has in practice always resulted in protection. It has certainly been so in the case of France, Germany, the United States of America, and in the case of Canada. All these countries began with retaliation and they ended in simple protection.

But there is another point to be considered in this matter. Do we find that those retaliatory nations get better bargains for themselves than we do with our policy of the most-favoured-nation clause? I believe it to be absolutely untrue that they do get better bargains. We have had, I believe, the most-favoured-nation clause in force with Germany, France, Russia, and with Italy. Perhaps I ought to except Russia, because ever since the Sugar Convention I believe Russia has put duties on our Indian teas which may have a very serious effect. Therefore I do not think the first effect of this policy of retaliation is such as to induce us to go light-heartedly into it generally. I do not know whether noble Lords opposite happen to live in the country, and have heard about the price of sugar in the humble homes spoken of, but as far as my experience goes, and I have figures from several Co-operative Societies in the South, since the Sugar Convention was put into force the price of sugar has gone up, and it is a very serious matter to find that not only has the price of sugar gone up but the consumption of sugar per head of the whole country has decreased. The consumption of sugar in this country per head in the year 1900 was 87·18 lbs, but in the year 1902 it fell to 83·95 lbs per head of the population. I am aware that time has not yet quite arrived to say what the effect may be absolutely, but I fully believe that the reason of the rise in the price of sugar is owing to the operation of the Sugar Convention. I should like to ask also whether in this policy of retaliation it has been considered what a terrible effect it would have if other countries began to retaliate, as they certainly will, upon our shipping. I do not wish now to go into the figures, but everybody who has looked at the question during the last four years must have seen with astonishment how we, the only free importing country, have got the shipping almost of the world. I think it is also too often forgotten that the United States, who have pursued a totally different policy from our own—indeed they have pursued the policy which we are now asked to adopt—have come down from being the great carriers of the world to practically nothing at all. I fancy that shipping is the very easiest thing for foreign countries to attack, and I do not think it is for a Government which has spent more money than any Government for the last seventy years, during which time Consols have gone down from 112 to 87, to ask us as business men to alter a policy which has so much developed our trade.

I noticed yesterday we were asked whether we could say that on the whole trade was good. I think everybody admits that trade is good if you ask amongst business people. If you look at the figures I should for my own part be willing to admit that trade was good, and I care much more about the actual facts than what are called "tendencies." I shall not repeat the figures which have been given us so admirably to-night by the noble Duke as regards our industries, but I do protest myself, at this attempt to divide articles into manufactured and non-manufactured articles. I believe the case which has been so much put before the country and based upon those figures is a case which cannot be maintained. Nobody can settle what is a manufactured and what is a non-manufactured article. I say that the most serious thing in this new policy seems to me to be the question of giving more power to the Executive Government. In my own opinion the Executive Government has got far too much power in its own hands. What is Parliament? Why are we sitting here? What did it originate in? Why, in money being got by taxation from the people when the people were unwilling to give it without the fullest and freest discussion. The centuries that have gone by have proved that it is most undesirable to give to the Executive Government a weapon to be used at their own discretion without consulting Parliament. Anyone who looks at the history of Parliament will see the jealous care which Parliament has always exercised upon financial matters. I have not heard a single word from any of the noble Earls opposite to justify us in granting them the power of using this weapon themselves by means of the Executive Government, rather than in the old way of bringing in a Bill before Parliament. For these reasons I venture to hope that the Government will give us definite information as to what they mean by retaliation, and I beg to support the mover of this Motion.

EARL CARRINGTON: My noble friend who introduced this Motion is reported to have stated what is the attitude of the agricultural community upon this question and he said—

> "Agriculturists do not seem to care very much for Mr. Chamberlain's proposals which have been placed before the country."

I cannot forget that Mr. Chamberlain, at Greenock, on 7th October last year, told us that agriculture had been practically destroyed. I am one of those individuals whose money is entirely invested in land, and I am entirely dependent on the rents that come from my tenants, and, consequently, I received this statement with a good deal of apprehension. I was, however, comforted with the thought that perhaps after all it was only a theory, but, as far as I am aware, the distinguished statesman who made this prophecy has never owned, nor, as far as I am aware, has ever been the cultivator of a single acre of agricultural land. But Mr. Chamberlain rather raised our hopes when he told us after that rather dismal prophecy that his proposals, which all the country are aware of, would not raise the price of food one farthing, and that they were calculated to benefit all classes of the community; which means, I suppose, the landlords, the tenant farmers, the agricultural labourers, and the country parsons, who, to use a homely phrase, are four dogs all gnawing at the same bone. Mr. Chaplin, who is one of our great agricultural authorities, also gave us some comforting information, because he pointed out what the resolutions were that were passed fairly unanimously in the different counties in England by the different Chambers of Agriculture, and he depended a great deal on these resolutions, which more or less have been friendly to the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain. But after all, I think the House will agree with me that Chambers of Agriculture are sometimes composed of loquacious gentlemen who have not been successful in agricultural pursuits, and perhaps Chamber of Agriculture meetings are not very numerously attended, and, consequently, their resolutions do not deserve the importance which they themselves would sometimes be apt to attribute to them. Consequently, I thought it might be a good thing to take the practical opinion of the tenant farmers themselves individually, and if the House will forgive a personal reference I would like to inform your Lordships of the result of my own investigations. I sent round two or three questions to some of my principal tenants to ask what their practical opinion, as men of business, would be upon this question as my co-partners in agriculture. My estate includes about 24,000 acres, and I have about 200 tenants holding different sorts of holdings from about 9,000 to 150 acres, and I have 3,000 small holdings and allotment tenants, which I have been fortunate enough, with the co-operation of my tenants, to put on the ground. These small holding tenants were unanimous against Mr. Chamberlain's proposal, and I think very few of this class would be found to be in favour of them. I sent four questions to fifty-two of my principal tenants to ask them their opinion as to the proposals brought before the country by Mr. Chamberlain. The first question I put was—

> "If Mr. Chamberlain's proposals become the law of the land would you allow me to have some share in the new prosperity that we are promised, by giving some increase on the present rental?"

The second question was—

> "Would you be able to employ more labour on your farm?"

The third question was—

> "Would you be able to offer increased agricultural wages, say 2s., 2s. 6d., or 3s. per week more than the present current wage?".

I put on these question papers "Yes" and "No," and asked them to scratch out either one or the other and return the paper. The fourth question was—

> "If you are unable to do all these things at once how long would it be, in your opinion, before we should all reach this desirable state of things?"

My tenants were extremely good-natured, and they took a lively interest in this agricultural catechism, and the replies they gave, and the opinions expressed by them, are very instructive. From twenty-eight tenants came the reply—

> "We shall be unable to pay any more rent, or employ any more labour, or give any higher wages, and we would rather give no opinion whatever on the subject."

That was a very decided answer. From seven more—one of whom has a bust of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham on his chimney piece—came replies saying they would rather not commit themselves. They wrote—

> "It is a very great subject; we must think it over, and we would rather not commit ourselves or give any opinion, good, bad, or indifferent."

From twenty-one the answers were perhaps a little more hopeful, for they wrote to say that they were generally favourable. Five of them answered "Yes" to the first three questions, but the majority said:—

> "They might be able to employ more labour, or to give their landlords, perhaps, or their labourers perhaps, a little more money."

But very few of them said they would give both. That was more generally satisfactory, but unfortunately there was a saving clause as regards the fourth question put by me, which your Lordships will recollect was in the following terms—

> "If you are unable to do all these things at once how long would it be, in your opinion, before we should all reach this desirable state of things?"

The answers were very unsatisfactory indeed. Two hopeful creatures thought that it might perhaps be in two or three years, but nobody said at once; they said in two or three years they might possibly be able to do something either for me or the labourers on the land. Fifteen replied—

> "Not for several years."

And amongst those were several who stated—

> "When corn growing pays."

That was rather interesting, because the general consensus of opinion was that the prices would have to go up at least 25 per cent. before any more money could be paid. The other four were in a very disappointed state and they made up the twenty-one. These four said they thought they would be able to pay a little more money to myself or the labourers in an unlimited time. One said—

> "In a thousand years, and probably never."

And the last man said—

> "Never."

I think the House will agree with me that we can hardly call these practical persons unduly sanguine about Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. Amongst the answers came some very curious covering letters upon the question of the right hon. Gentleman's agricultural proposals. One tenant began farming under my father, and farms a tremendous lot of land, pays a wages bill amounting to £4,000 a year, and is well-to-do and an excellent practical farmer. He says—

> "It would be several years before I could employ more labour."

He pays capital wages, and in his opinion he could not employ any more labour for several years, and he adds—

> "But I cannot pay one penny more rent."

Then I got another opinion from three brothers in Lincolnshire. Their father was a farm labourer in North Lincolnshire, and he brought his children up extremely well. These three brothers went on the land with small holdings and began with half an acre apiece. They went on to a fifty acres, seventy acres, and 100 acres, and now the three have a 250 acre farm and they are doing well. They say—

> "We do not approve of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals; we hope they will never become law. We do not think we should benefit by them in any way, and we think it would be worse for the country in every respect."

I will give one more opinion, and it is the last. It is from another tenant farmer in Lincolnshire, who has a very large farm, and in good times he used to pay £2,000. He has been forty-one years on the estate, and he has not done badly, because it has come to my knowledge, when he asked for a reduction of rent, that he had bought 700 acres in the county of Norfolk out of farming, so I thought that fact alone showed he had done extremely well, and I thought w could continue as we were. This gentleman writes—

"I am strongly in favour of Mr. Chamberlain, but he does not go far enough."

That I think is the crux of the whole case, and if you want the farmers to back up the Government in their policy which we hope they will introduce at no distant date, I am afraid that 2s on corn and 5 per cent on dairy produce and meat will be of very little value to the farmers. Mr. Chaplin says we must have wheat at 40s. If you want it at that price and the American price is 23s. you will have to put 17s. a quarter on wheat. I leave it to the Government to decide whether the working man will pay that price. If you want the farmers with you you will have to put a more considerable duty on wheat because 2s. a quarter, as my tenant said, does not go half far enough. A small duty would not raise the price of food or yield a profit to the farmer which would enable him to pay higher wages. I think that a good many tenant farmers will be found to agree with the Marquess of Salisbury, who is reported in *The Times* to have said that—

"There is no reason to suppose that with protection everybody would be richer."

I suppose we may take it for granted that the noble Marquess Lord Salisbury last night was not only speaking for himself—and perhaps I shall be contradicted if I am wrong—but I take it for granted that he was speaking not only for himself but for all his colleagues, including Lord Onslow, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and all the members of His Majesty's Government, when he said that the Government were not concerned to defend the policy of that distinguished statesman, Mr. Chamberlain. I apologise to the House for having intervened in this debate, but I felt, as an agriculturist and as a person entirely dependent on land, that we should have heard from the other side of the House something on the agricultural side of the question, but perhaps later on in the debate we shall be told what the ideas of His Majesty's Government are on this great question. Once more I beg to apologise to the House for having intervened in the debate, and I express the hope that we shall have some decided and intelligible statement from His Majesty's Government as regards agriculture, which, of course, is so great and important an industry in this country.

*THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON: My Lords, last night I listened to the speech of the noble Marquess who spoke for the first time in this House, but to whom I have often listened in the other House, and I should have been glad, had he been present, to congratulate him upon the excellence of his remarks, especially as he made one or two distinct statements which, though they have not cleared away some of our doubts, at all events have given us a little light upon the subject before the House. He told us that the Government would consider the Motion of the noble Earl as a vote of want of confidence in the Government. I confess that I consider it is a vote of want of confidence, but I feel that it is justified, considering what the country is at present thinking as regards His Majesty's Government, and especially considering what has taken place on those occasions which afford us our only opportunity of testing the feeling of the country, viz., the by-elections. It seems to me that the country as much as the Opposition has lost confidence in His Majesty's Government. The last expression of opinion came from Mid Herts, a part of the country with which the noble Marquess is intimately acquainted, and as he declared himself as distinctly opposed to what is called the Chamberlain policy, I should have been glad to learn from him whether he was pleased or sorry at the result of that election. As a matter of fact, at the present moment we are all turning our thoughts to the general election which is impending. At that general election there will be decided—I do not think it can be postponed to another election—one of the gravest issues ever placed before the country. I am going to endeavour to keep to the Motion and the Amendment before the House, but we must recognise the fact that the general election will not and cannot be fought on the question of retaliation; it will be fought upon what is known as Mr. Chamberlain's policy. We had another speech last night from the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty, in which he certainly declared himself as an "anti-free-importer," and we heard from the noble Marquess just before that we on this side of the House were unconvinced Tories. I have been accustomed in my political life to be called many bad names, but I confess it is something new to be called an unconvinced Tory. Though I deny altogether that I am an unconvinced Tory, I will acknowledge myself to be a convinced free-importer, and it is upon that issue in my opinion that the battle will be fought at the next general election.

We are asking at the present moment for more information from His Majesty's Government as regards their retaliation policy. I heard the speech of the noble Earl on the Woolsack to-night. He seemed to impress upon us the fact that we were not to be too inquisitive as regards the private opinions of Cabinet Ministers, and, as it seemed to me, he also suggested that it would be better if we were not too particular as regards the collective opinion of the Cabinet. I am perfectly aware that the noble Earl did not say that, but I think he suggested it. At the present moment we are pressing for the collective opinion of the Cabinet on a particular question which they say will occupy our attention at the next general election, and we have not yet in any way obtained that collective opinion. We have heard and read a great many opinions from various members of the Cabinet, but we are still unaware whether they are all of the same mind even on the subject of retaliation. When Ministers speak, either in the other House or in your Lordships' House, they devote very little time to the subject of retaliation, and a great deal of time to Mr. Chamberlain's policy, and, if I may with all respect say so, I think the noble Earl on the Woolsack, although at first I thought he was going to keep to the subject of retaliation, did not refrain from wandering from that subject into the more important matter embodied in Mr. Chamberlain's policy.

We are all perfectly aware what retaliation means. There is no difficulty in understanding that. We have had many instances of retaliation taking place between Russia and Germany, France and Italy, and I noticed in the speech of the noble Marquess who moved the Amendment that he instanced the case of Switzerland, in regard to which he said that when Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs he was a little inclined to threaten Switzerland because their tariff was inimical to the interests of our trade. We are all perfectly aware of what retaliation means. We have had our experience of the Sugar Convention. But the question at the present moment is not what retaliation or negotiation means, but how will the Government carry out the policy of retaliation if—as is very doubtful—they receive a mandate from the country at the coming general election? I appeal now to the noble Marquess the Leader of His Majesty's Government in this House. Is it not the case that either in the other House or in your Lordships' House a responsible Minister of the Crown can at any moment come down and propose retaliation against a foreign nation? As far as I am aware, there is absolutely nothing to prevent the noble Marquess himself bringing before this House, or some other member of the Government bringing before the other House, any gross case—I am using words which have been used in speeches—of unfairness on the part of a foreign nation towards this country as regards preference, or import duties, or anything else. There is absolutely nothing to prevent any member of His Majesty's Government coming before us, without any mandate or general election, presenting a policy of retaliation in a concrete form, and appealing to the good sense of his fellow countrymen to support the Government in a policy which they believe to be the best for manufactures and our people. If I may respectfully say so, I think that point has been somewhat overlooked during this discussion.

If that is the case I am anxious to know why a mandate is required or asked for. I should like to ask the noble Marquess to explain to-night what would be the difference in his action if he received a mandate from the country as compared with the present condition of affairs under which he has full power to come before Parliament and ask for authority to use retaliation. I think that is a fair point to put to the noble Marquess, especially as there are at the present moment suspicions—I will not say more than that—as regards the action of His Majesty's Government in this matter. If there is power at present to retaliate without any mandate of general election, what did the noble Marquess mean — I know he dislikes the term, but I use it only because it shortly explains my case—when he asked for a revolver? He was asking for much more than he at present possesses if I understand him aright. And what did the words of the Prime Minister mean when he spoke of the "complete reversal" of the traditional fiscal policy of this country? I am told that we are asking for information which we are not likely to receive. I think my question is one which ought to be answered before we go to a division. If there is no difference between what we can now do and what we are to be asked to do in the future, we can all vote for both the Motion of the noble Earl and the Amendment of the noble Marquess opposite, for they would in such circumstances mean absolutely the same thing. The whole point lies in what is the extra authority His Majesty's Government are anxious to possess. The only thing I can see is that there may be a doubt in the mind of His Majesty's Government as to whether Parliament would accept their proposals for retaliation at the present moment, and that consequently they would like to have a general election on the subject so as to be quite sure of greater support than they at present have. But can it be conceived that His Majesty's Government believe that they will get greater support after the next general election in favour of retaliation than they are likely to get in the present House of Commons and the House of Lords—especially in the other House? It is admitted that the control of Parliament is to be kept supreme. If the noble Marquess came down with any proposal it would be the same thing now. I noticed that when the noble Marquess who moved the Amendment was speaking last night he emphasised the word "each" in the Motion of the noble Earl. Is the only difference that in the future it will not be a question of each individual case of the imposition of a duty coming before Parliament, or is it that a sort of conglomeration of import duties will be placed before us, or will it be the case that in the future, as at present, we should have a distinct proposal as regards the beating down of import duties against us, when any foreign country proposes to impose duties which may do harm to our manufactures or manufacturers? I confess for my part, free-importer as I am, that if His Majesty's Government came down with a good case of grave injustice against any manufacture, and if it could be proved that by retaliation we should do no harm whatever to any other industries or to those employed in other industries, I think their plea for retaliation would meet with very favourable consideration at the hands of the people. But I do not see that that is the present proposal of His Majesty's Government. There seems to be something behind which has not appeared, and in discussing this question we cannot help reviewing what has happened during the last few months.

We are aware now that a proposal of what we call protection—to use a short term—was brought before His Majesty's Government before Mr. Chamberlain went to South Africa. We are aware that the Prime Minister sympathised to a certain extent with that proposal, but that he felt the country would not accept it because they would not agree to the imposition of any duties on the food of the people. We cannot help coming to the conclusion, therefore, that the retaliation policy was adopted subsequently to the proposal of Mr. Chamberlain's policy, and as a sort of a stop-gap for the ultimate adoption by His Majesty's Government of the policy of protection. The whole of the political machinery of the supporters of His Majesty's Government is in the hands of those who favour Mr. Chamberlain's policy. I am aware that there are a certain number of members of His Majesty's Government who at the present moment say, and I believe sincerely say, that they are opposed altogether to anything further than retaliation. Well, if they stick to their opinion it seems to me that in the future they may be cast off as other members of the Cabinet have been, and be put outside when the true views of His Majesty's Government are placed before the country. The whole country are at the present moment thinking and speaking—and after all we have enough of speeches—not of the subject of retaliation, but of the subject of protection. We who take some part on the public platforms of the country are aware that the only thing which interests the public mind is the Birmingham policy; no interest at all is taken in the retaliation policy—whatever it may be—of the Government. That is the outside, the public view, and I think that when we come to close quarters with the Government as we are coming to-night, and as they came the other night in the other House, we ought to receive, before going into the lobbies, a distinct and plain statement, not of what retaliation means, for that we understand, but as to the exact difference between the powers which His Majesty's Government at present possess for the purposes of retaliation, and the powers which they will ask us to grant them after a general election.

I said that we were suspicious. We are more than suspicious; we are alarmed. We feel that this is one of the gravest questions that have ever come before us. I am told that there is some fear in the minds of others that if this question were decided against the Government it might cause a change politically, so that for some time in the future we should have a Liberal instead of a Conservative Government, and that there would be some danger then of measures being introduced by that Liberal Government which Unionists would feel bound to oppose. We are told that if the Government is defeated there will be a danger of Home Rule. As far as I understand the present position of the question, the Bills that were introduced by Mr. Gladstone—the Home Rule Bill and the Land Bill—are absolutely dead. There is no fear whatever that any sane Liberal statesman would ever introduce such measures again. I do not for a moment believe that these questions could be raised in the next Parliament. I am perfectly well aware that there will be an extension of local government through all parts of the United Kingdom, but that is another matter. We are face to face now, in my opinion, with as great a danger as the Unionist Party had to face in the Home Rule Parliament. We believe that any attempt to reverse our fiscal policy will, bring upon this country not only danger but ruin. We believe that any change in our fiscal policy such as is proposed by those who really express their minds, would not only bring ruin upon our country but also cause amongst our working population as great distress as was caused in the old times of protection. We are not taking this matter lightly; we are taking it seriously. We are determined—when I say "we" I am only speaking for those amongst whom I move, not so much Members of your Lordships' House as those outside—to do all that in us lies to prevent what we consider a suicidal policy being carried into effect. In my opinion it is not a matter of Party; it is a matter in which every patriotic Englishman ought to take the keenest interest, and one which those who know most about it ought to oppose with all their heart and with all the force they can command.

The Marquess of Northampton.

We are told that this question of the alteration of our fiscal policy is a question of Empire. We who consider ourselves as strong Imperialists as any who sit on the Benches opposite do not believe the Empire is in danger. We believe the unity of the Empire will be in danger if you venture to carry out any part of the policy which has been proposed by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, and it is because we think the Government are going in that direction with their retaliation policy that we are determined to oppose it.

*LORD ROBERTSON: My Lords, I should imagine that when the Unionist Party desires advice as to the dangers which beset it from the side of Ireland they will not resort to the noble Marquess opposite for consolation or information. Although I am opposed to the policy of His Majesty's Government on this particular subject, yet I must say that I think it is rather too open an invitation to walk into a trap which has just now been addressed to us by the noble Marquess. I, for my part, think that the danger from Home Rule is urgent, and one of my chief accusations against His Majesty's Government is that in a movement of that kind they have introduced measures which have shattered the Unionist Party. The subject which we have before us to-night has been brought to a point by the Motion and the Amendment before the House. The question immediately to be decided is whether my Lord Crewe's

Motion should be adopted, or whether instead of that we should adopt the Amendment which has been moved by the noble Marquess. When I first read the Motion of the noble Earl opposite, I searched for an excuse for voting with the Government, and I thought I had found it. It was that the Motion of the noble Earl was a platitude and was axiomatic, that it declared principles of Parliamentary conduct so plain that they ought not to be resolved upon by this House in the year 1904, because a proceeding of that kind was likely to throw doubt upon them. Just as one would decline to resolve on some proposal embodied in Magna Charta, I thought I had found a satisfactory excuse for myself in voting against a Motion which upset ideas instead of settling them. But the leaders of my Party and the heads of the Government think differently, and what they propose is this—that while Lord Crewe's Motion does nothing more than declare—

> "That no duty . . .should be imposed, modified, or removed, without the formal consent of Parliament to each such proposal,"

we are now asked to pass a long Resolution that—

> "This House, while affirming the constitutional doctrine that all the fiscal arrangements of this country must be subject to the full and effective control of Parliament over taxation, is not prepared to lay down rules for the guidance of future Parliaments as to the exact method in which such control should be exercised by them in cases which may hereafter arise."

I cannot find in Lord Crewe's Motion anything at all about "rules for the guidance of future Parliaments" as to the exact method in which anything should be done; it merely asserts what can be found in any text-book in which is laid down the relation of Parliament to imposts upon imports. This seems to me not merely in itself an important matter, but a highly significant one. The House will remember that when in old days Parliament asserted against the King the sole right of determining what imposts should be laid upon imports into this country, it was with reference, among other things, to this very question of retaliatory duties. I do not know whether noble Lords, unless their attention has been specially directed to it, are aware that in the year 1610, when these great constitutional questions were raised, one of the arguments for the King's power—by which, of course, we mean now the power of the Executive—of levying duties was this: *Lex talionis* is to be applied for the defence of British commerce, goods for goods, tax for tax. Accordingly this question was full in view of the statesmen of those days. And what was said in the Petition of Rights was this—

> "If the levying of impositions be indeed the only means left to redress a grievance, why should it not be done by Act of Parliament in these times as by Henry VII. and Queen Elizabeth ?"

I grant that Henry VII. and Queen Elizabeth lived even longer ago than Mr. Cobden, and I suppose that the exhortation of Mr. Balfour addressed to faithful followers, who I should have thought might have escaped that reproach, implied that we ought to bring our ideas up to date. I have brought them up to date, and I venture to say that this is sound doctrine in this year of grace much more than it was even then. Why do I say so? Because it is not for nothing that this difference is made. This Amendment is moved upon Lord Crewe's Resolution. As I have said, Lord Crewe's Resolution is the tame milk and water constitutional doctrine of this country. But what is wanted now is to drop a broad hint that future Parliaments may amend this in such a way as to bring about the easier imposition of duties. So I read the Amendment. It is in your Lordships' judgment; it is before you all. I cannot understand why Lord Crewe's Motion is to be rejected. I could understand its being rejected altogether merely because it is a platitude, but I cannot understand its being rejected in favour of this new-fangled Amendment. I have said I cannot imagine it being rejected; perhaps that is hardly frank. I can imagine.

There is a new notion abroad that Parliament ought by Act of Parliament to devolve upon the Executive the power of imposing duties upon imports. I will refer for a moment to a very able and very temperately written book by Professor Ashley of Birmingham, which I expect has had a good deal to do with some of the speeches that have been delivered in the course of the autumn recess. Professor Ashley says (it is all highly condensed, his book has that among other merits)—

> "What seems dictated by the requirements of the case is a statutory authorisation of the Executive to impose the duty that may be required from time to time as circumstances arise."

Now, my Lords, it is open to the noble Marquess to say, and he is well entitled to do so, that this is merely a professor—although he will observe it is a Birmingham professor—but I may say for the information of noble Lords around me, who I am quite certain to a large extent think that Mr. Chamberlain's policy is on the whole in favour of the country, and that it is a sound protectionist policy, that if they will buy that book for half-a-crown (I am not an agent for its circulation) they will be in a position to pose as seers and prophets and missionaries of Empire to their heart's content. They have it all there in that book, down to jams and pickles.

I have dwelt upon this question, the immediate question, upon which we are to vote, for this reason: I think it is highly significant that the veil of obscurity which has been drawn over the region within which retaliation is to be exercised, the mode by which it is to be exercised, and the authority by which the Ministry is to be authorised to proceed to enact it, applies to the legislative proceedings as well as to everything else. But now I want to ask the House to consider this: What is the area or region within which retaliatory duties are to be imposed? It seems to me that that is one of the first questions to be determined. I may say frankly for myself that to the general doctrine of retaliation as stated by the Foreign Secretary last year I have no objection whatever. It seems to me, whether it be consistent with the strictest sect of free trade or not, it is at all events an acceptable doctrine and worthy of practice that the diplomacy of this country should be busy in furthering the trade of the country, that it should concern itself with the removing by diplomatic methods of the barriers which obstruct the trade of this country. And I may say here, and I hope I shall not say anything to offend the susceptibilities of noble Lords on the other side, that I think if some Liberal

Governments had shown a little more activity and a little more sensibility on this subject twenty years ago, this question might very likely never have arisen. Still, so far as I am concerned, I have no objection whatever to your doctrine of negotiation and even of retaliation. But, couple the latter word with this. The effectiveness of this method as a whole must depend upon the ultimate result of the policy of retaliation. I hope I shall not be saying anything rude or forward if I express my doubt whether that aspect of the question has been fully considered. To this general doctrine I believe on this side of the House there is no objection; I believe that even on the other side there is very little objection to it; there may be a lingering doubt as to its doctrinaire aspect, and consequently as to its practical consequences, and I also reserve my doubts as to its practical consequences. But if the Unionist Government had come forward spontaneously, on their own initiative, and proposed the policy of negotiation and retaliation, I believe they would have had the Conservative and Unionist Party at their back to a man. But they have not done so. The hitch in the whole argument which is persistently ignored by noble Lords on the Treasury Bench is that this is not a first hand proposal. This is not a proposal which arises either from the opinion of the Party on this side or from the exigencies of the country. It arises, on the contrary—I am speaking now not of motive, but entirely of the political sequence of events—from a move made by a distinguished politician in the Unionist Party. That is the real truth, and that accounts—I deeply regret to say it—for the vapid and inane explanation of the existence of this policy which we are receiving from day to day from the Government.

These are the circumstances which seem to me to make it doubly imperative on His Majesty's Government that we should be treated with an abundant frankness on this subject. I speak for one moment, and merely to dismiss the subject, of the humble individual before you. I am a Tory who has seen the Tory Party grow in power and strength, and have rejoiced in it. I have no interest in this matter except to see that those institutions which to the benefit of the country have swayed its fortunes during the last eighteen years should continue so to operate. I see on the contrary the policy of the Government drifting this Party to ruin and destruction. The noble Earl on the Woolsack has contributed to this debate in the most remarkable manner. I am, as he knows, his colleague, his disciple, and his admirer, but my powers of admiration have been exhausted to-night by the declaration he has made. Custom cannot stale his infinite variety. He has told us to-night that this fiscal question, this question of a tariff, can be settled without prejudice to any difference of opinion between free trade and protection. I remembered at the moment an illustration used by Fitzjames Stephen in one of his memorable books, viz.—that you can no more do this (whatever it was he was speaking of) than you can do sums right without prejudice to a difference of opinion upon the multiplication table. It seems to me that that declaration removes indefinitely any possibility of arriving at sound ideas upon the Government policy. The Government policy seems to be something like the horizon which you advance towards and never reach.

Now, my Lords, I want to ask the representatives of the Government on the Treasury Bench one or two plain questions. First of all, they are aware, at least I hope they cannot but be aware, of this, that they attained their majority of fifty-one the other night in the House of Commons because Mr. Akers Douglas declared at the most solemn moment when a Parliamentary pledge can be given, just before the division, that the Government were opposed to duties upon food and raw material. Now, I pray the House to observe, because we require to draw distinctions, it is not that taxes upon food and raw material do not form part of the Government policy; we have heard that very often, but it is this time definitely that the Government are opposed to taxes on food and raw material. I hope my noble friends on these Benches will observe that that is the condition upon which we are proceeding in this debate. There are to be no taxes upon food or raw material; therefore any of us who had brilliant ideas about taxes which would make some of our friends rich—I mean the farmers and people of that kind—must send them away to that capacious reservoir of unfulfilled promises which is associated with the name of Birmingham. If you so circumscribe the area within which your policy of negotiation and retaliation is to operate, how will it work out? I suppose I shall be told that that is a question of detail into which it is impertinent to intrude; that is the tone of the discussion. When my noble friend Lord Salisbury—whom as an old House of Commons friend I would gladly have congratulated, in his presence, on the success of his speech last night, in which he showed the charming qualities of character as well as of speech which endeared him to us—I say that when Lord Salisbury spoke on this subject and infused into our debate an absence of mystification which at all events was gratifying, he said flatly that he was against Mr. Chamberlain's views, and he said various other things which, as I have said, brought a tonic into our somewhat oppressed atmosphere. I want to ask the noble Lord who is going to reply on behalf of the Government, can it be possible that they do not adhere to Mr. Akers Douglas' promise given on the eve of the division upon which as a Ministry they exist? And if they do, how does the policy of retaliation work out? Has that point been thought of? I own with great regret that the more I press into this question the more I am convinced that the whole of this subject has not been thought out. I cannot think that the obvious objections and the obvious difficulties which beset the whole of this question would not have been met and considered and cleared away if it had been possible to do so or if any pains had been taken about it.

But then comes a serious question which really and truly has alone caused me to speak to-night. There was said in the House of Commons not long ago something which I really think ought never to have been said by a Conservative Minister. He had been appealed to on this very subject to tell us—observe "us," not you of the Opposition who are hungering for some fault in the Government, but us who want merely to be satisfied in going on and supporting the Conservative Party as we have known it—he had been asked to tell whether he could not state, even on this vital question of the constitutional procedure to be adopted, whether Parliament was to be approached before these measures were sanctioned, and various other things of that sort; and Mr. Gerald Balfour said that that question of procedure—of procedure, observe the degree of confidence between Minister and country—had been settled—by what? By Mr. Gladstone's conduct about the Home Rule Bill! I hope I shall not offend the susceptibilities of noble Lords opposite, many of whom were Mr. Gladstone's friends, if I speak freely of the characteristics of that statesman's methods. I will not go further than this: they were sometimes, particularly in his later days, wily and astute, and, on this side of the House, language was applied to them which was a good deal more pointed. We, on this side of the House, thought, and we think still, that it was not fair to the country that they should be involved in proceedings of vital importance to the safety of the Empire unless they were told exactly how they worked out. I say the same now. I am not going too far when I say that it is not right that a Conservative Minister should appeal to us to keep quiet, and to shut our eyes and our ears about a matter of vital importance to the poor and rich of this country alike, merely because upon a certain occasion our most bitter opponent, under our fierce denunciation, had made a somewhat similar economy as to the facts. I could understand all this if it were applied to noble Lords opposite as a *tu quoque* which would silence their tongues, but I cannot understand the leaders of the Conservative Party turning round upon us, who have never done anything to forfeit their confidence, and saying: "We will treat you as Mr. Gladstone, your direst opponent, treated you."

I heard last night, with more than interest, the appeal made by my noble friend Lord Selborne to his supporters on this side of the House. He said that this was a vote of want of confidence, and he appealed to us whether we were going to throw away vital interests, of which the Unionist Party are the custodians, merely because we differed from the Government on this subject. The noble Duke touched on the subject to-night; I also will venture to touch on it because I am a Tory who is going to vote against the Government, and I feel bound to say one or two words on the subject. We are represented as leaving or deserting our Party at a critical moment and imperilling Unionist interests. I stand astonished at that accusation. What is the history of this matter? It is a history of the last two years. When the present Government—by which I mean the Government of Mr. Balfour—acceded to power, they came into possession of the lead of the Unionist Party—Mr. Balfour, especially, as a Tory, came into the lead of the Tory Party—when that Party had attained a strength and a power and a usefulness which had never been rivalled in this country. I believe, for my part, that if the Party had been kept out of this morass into which it has been led it would have maintained the confidence, and the proud confidence, of the country for a generation to come. What has been done? I do not refer to my distinguished friends who are now scattered over the two Houses of Parliament; I refer rather to those graver and deeper differences which have been created by the act of the Unionist Government. The Conservative Party—I speak of it because I know it best, and without the smallest disparagement to the Liberal Unionists—had been built up by Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury into a momentous organ of national welfare; it had based its power by showing the identity of its principles with those of the loyal working classes; and, what was equally striking, it had done exactly what Matthew Arnold told it to do twenty years ago—it had made friends with the mind of the country. With those two elements on the one side and the other the path of prosperity and progress was clear before it. What has happened? We have seen the word and idea of Empire, which had cheered our people on to great exertions in the past, vulgarised beyond description. We have seen a successful attempt to capture a Party based upon the deepest and clearest principles of national life and conduct, and the Party is now being turned into some sort of trading machine.

I am going to ask the Government one more question about their policy of negotiation and retaliation. How do they intend to work it out in this country? As my noble friend Lord James said in his admirable speech—a speech which ought to be read all over the country—

"Who brings you tidings of your mandate?" The answer must be "Mr. Chamberlain's candidates." Of course; you have not got enough of your own. Will the noble Marquess at the head of the Government in this House show me a complement, a sufficiency, of candidates on the Conservative and Unionist side who are able to bring him back the clear tidings, "We have brought the financial truth through all difficulties; no more taxation of bread, and, on the other hand, no more foolish Cobdenism, but the very soul and truth of the word, and you are in a majority?" My noble friend has no more prospect of that than he has of excluding Home Rulers from the next Parliament. What I want to ask is this. At the end of the day if — and it is a large "if"—the Chamberlainites bring triumph to your standard, what is to be done? I would not insure at a high rate your puny policy of negotiation and retaliation. I greatly fear that they would go by the board and you with them, and the question is—What then? This is one of the points upon which I am most anxious. Should this election go in favour of fiscal reform, what is coming? A ministry of Mr. Chamberlain. And what then becomes of Church and State? What becomes of the schools in which noble Lords on this side interested themselves so greatly last year? Would they not be open to the first bidder, who would go one higher on the subject of tariff reform? Have you considered that the miscarriage of your puny barque of negotiation and retaliation means the return into port with full sail of a system of Government the methods of propagating which were embodied in old-age pensions and in the promise of high wages? That is a consummation to which I frankly decline to be a party. I owe Mr. Chamberlain no allegiance, and I decline for my part, and I hope many noble Lords will be found to do the same, to lend a hand to anything which will bring about such a sinister catastrophe.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, perhaps I may be permitted to vary the ordinary formula which comes from those who address the House for the first time by asking your Lordships' indulgence for one who has not, as far as he knows, addressed the House for nine years. I had no desire to intervene in this debate, and I can promise the House that I shall not trespass on their indulgence for any lengthened period. I am sorry I entered the House at a late period in the speech of my noble friend behind me (Lord Robertson) and that I am not able to follow the arguments of a somewhat singular nature by which he appeared to be supporting his view. I did hear, however, an attack upon a very distinguished statesman — Mr. Chamberlain—and it appeared to me, from what I could hear, that my noble friend was not prepared to consider on its merits the all-important question which is now before the House. He was filled with anticipations of evil which might arise from the triumph of Mr. Chamberlain; he saw before him a disestablished church, and various other matters which I think it will hardly be necessary for us to discuss to-night. As I said before, I am very unwilling to intrude in this, as in any other, debate, but I am impelled to say a few words, in the first place, because during the whole of this discussion I have not heard one word in support of the position which I feel I ought to occupy in this discussion.

As a result of the debates, both in the other House and in your Lordships' House, we have arrived, as far as I can understand, at a unanimous agreement upon one subject. I have not heard anyone on these Benches, or read of anyone elsewhere, who doubts that we have arrived at a time at which our trade and commerce is carried on under conditions which require, if not amendment, at all events consideration. That lands us, at all events, at the first stage of the discussion. Of course, there are some noble Lords, and I am afraid I must divide them into four categories, who have spoken in this debate, who appear to feel that in some cases there is no necessity for any change, and in other cases that that necessity is of a more modified character. Perhaps if I were to single out one among my noble friends as hardly appreciating the necessity for any action, or even for any consideration of this important question, I should point to my noble friend Lord Balfour of

Burleigh. I believe, if I understand his speech aright, that he sees no necessity for any inquiry into the system which now obtains, and he is quite content that we should remain as we are, and do nothing. Then there are noble Lords opposite. I do not think that any one of them will deny—I do not know that my noble friend who leads the Opposition has ever denied—that there is at all events a case for grave consideration, that there are doubts which must be solved, and although, as we know, his opinions are very distinct and very loyal upon the doctrine which he has always advocated—the doctrine of free trade—yet he and his noble friends also admit that something possibly may be done, though not in the sense of the proposals of the Government. Nobody, as far as I know, has mentioned in the course of the debate the alternative policy which has been placed before the country by the right hon. Gentleman the late Colonial Secretary. We have had attacks upon His Majesty's Government; we have heard that they have not expressed their own opinions clearly, and that they have not placed before the House a policy which is intelligible to us. To a certain extent I am obliged to coincide with that view. But with regard to the policy which has been very clearly laid before us by the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, nobody, as far as I know, has discussed that policy. Perhaps they were correct in not doing so, because that policy is not before the House. But if that policy is not before the House, I should like to know what is.

Here I should like to associate myself with those who have offered their sincere congratulations to my noble friend opposite who initiated the discussion on the admirable form which he has invented for the Motion now under discussion. It is one which I recommend to the notice of all those who in future will manage our business here. It is one which no doubt offers some difficulties to those who wish to meet it. My noble friend gave notice of a series of questions which he intended to put to His Majesty's Government; he answered those questions according to his own lights, and reserved to himself the right of moving, which gave him a *locus standi*, a Motion embodying a principle which had already been agreed to by my noble friend on this side of the House. That is a very convenient way, no doubt, of creating a peg upon which to hang a discussion, and I am bound to say that I listened with the greatest interest to the admirable speech which my noble friend delivered from his point of view.

I wish in the few words I shall address to the House to point to the difficulties in which the supporters of His Majesty's Government are placed by the apparent want, not only of information but of cohesion, which is to be found in all the utterances of the various members of the Government. We must all admit that the Government have been placed in exceptionally difficult circumstances during the debates on this subject. There is no man in the country who does not regret as much as I do the illness which has overtaken the Prime Minister. We have all watched by his bed-side; we have all grieved at the loss which his absence has entailed upon us and at the sufferings he has undergone; we have all been gratified to hear of the improvement of his health, and I am sure his return will be welcomed, to the great relief of all Members on both sides of both Houses of Parliament. I think there was a great deal to be said for the statement made in the other House of Parliament as to the position in which the members of the Cabinet then found themselves. They said, and with great reason, that the one man who had a right and who alone had a right, to expound the policy of the Government was the Prime Minister. But I noticed that they proceeded, as perhaps they were in duty bound to proceed, to expound that policy for themselves. What I have to find fault with—and I do so with the utmost respect—is the fact that those expositions have come upon us in a painful alternation, with an ebb and a flow, which has bewildered us all, with the general result that it is very difficult to ascertain where we stand and in what position we are with regard to this question. I have no hesitation in saying where I stand, because, although nobody has said so before in this House, and I am afraid nobody is about to say so, I myself am inclined to support the larger policy, the more frank policy, the more practical policy, which is embodied in the proposals which have been enunciated in public by my right hon. friend the late Secretary of State for the Colonies.

But while I say that, I wish to offer my tribute of respect to my noble friends—the noble Duke and others—who have never made any secret of the position which they have taken up on this question. They still are devoted to a policy which they call free trade and which they believe to be free trade, but which I think the noble Duke has modified into a policy merely of free imports. I hope I am not misinterpreting them. I think they are satisfied with the *status quo*, they do not see any reason for debating a policy to revive what is admitted to be an unsatisfactory state of trade, therefore, it is very difficult to urge anything which will have any effect upon them or induce them to join anyone who proposes fiscal reform. The policy of His Majesty's Government is I admit, of a very different character. His Majesty's Government has admitted that these difficulties exist; they have also intimated their intention to remedy them. We look to the Prime Minister and to his declarations for an explanation of the lines upon which they propose to deal with this all-important subject. I am sure I should not be considered to be taking any unfair advantage if I read a few extracts from a speech made by the Prime Minister, I think in June last, at the Constitutional Club, which, if he has not been able to inform us lately as to his views, at all events gives us a basis upon which we can found our appreciation of the policy which he intends to carry out. I think it was on 27th June last that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister attended a luncheon given at the Constitutional Club in honour of the late Colonial Secretary on his return from South Africa. The occasion was a very interesting one, and loth as I am to take part in any public functions of that sort, I determined to be present and to hear what the views of the Prime Minister at that time were. There was no doubt whatever about those views then. It fell to the lot of the Prime Minister to present an address to the then Secretary of State for the Colonies and to make a speech congratulating him on that visit to South Africa which was the admiration of all those who observed the energy with which the late Secretary of State for the Colonies performed a duty which few men at his age could have accomplished, and returned, having, as we believe, done a great work towards the pacification of, and the arrival at friendly arrangements in that important part of our dominions. The Prime Minister on that occasion, as I have said, proposed a vote of thanks to the late Colonial Secretary and presented him with an address, and he made several remarks on that occasion which I think bear upon the question now under your Lordships' consideration. He said—

> "It would be folly on the part of the Conservative or Unionist Party to make particular opinions on economical subjects a test of Party loyalty."

He said the questions were not new, and that he saw four dangers ahead. This, I think, is an important statement, because if there were four dangers ahead those dangers ought to be dealt with. He said that the first was what we now call "dumping," which he expressed in much more detailed language. The second he said was that negotiation with regard to tariffs was rendered extremely difficult or impossible by the present position of our tariff. Since Cobden's treaty with France and other concessions we had had nothing left to give. Now my Lords, I hardly know what this can mean except that retaliation will create for us something to give, and I doubt myself whether that can be done without protection. Then the third point of the Prime Minister was a protest relating to the Canadian-German difficulty. The fourth is in these words—

> "If possible there should be some arrangement made with these self-governing colonies which would unite us together in fiscal bonds."

And he added that he left that to his right hon. friend Mr. Chamberlain to deal with. This was at the banquet—

> "If possible there should be some arrangement made with these self-governing colonies which should unite us together in fiscal bonds."

We hope it may be possible, but we have heard nothing of that arrangement since. It is important to remark that I believe we all understood at the commencement of these discussions that the Imperial question, the question of drawing the Colonies closer to us, was to be one of the leading objects which the Government and Mr. Chamberlain proposed to themselves in starting this campaign. The Prime Minister further stated, in reference to the possible opposition to taxation on food—

> "There is no logical or substantial reason why a policy, if it be wise and if it be practicable in other ways, should not be carried out without increasing the cost of living to the working classes of this country; but, at all events, let us set our minds to consider how that can be met."

After what I had heard at that meeting I considered that the Prime Minister, if he did not wholly coincide with the views of the late Colonial Secretary, at all events agreed with him in the more important points of his policy. Not only that, but I understand that Mr. Chamberlain had the high sanction of the Prime Minister in the campaign in which he subsequently embarked. So far, so good. What I would like to ask on behalf of many supporters of the Government is this. We understood the position of the Government at the time to which I have just referred. What is our position now? We have had the debate in the other House of Parliament; we have had the debate just concluding in this House, but I suppose it would not be too much to say that if we looked for guidance to the speeches of members of the Cabinet we should be somewhat puzzled as to the decision at which we ought to arrive.

I may say at once as regards the Amendment before the House that I shall give it my humble support. I should always wish to support His Majesty's Government, because, if I understand their policy, they not only realise the difficulties under which we labour, but they are prepared with a policy which in their opinion is adequate, and which, whether we agree with it or not, is a policy in the direction which we may hope will lead to a remedy of the evils complained of. I cannot see any such hope in the attitude of noble Lords opposite. I think that any Motion proposed on behalf of His Majesty's Government in this matter should be supported by all of us, because, although we think they might go further, at the same time they are prepared to do something, while I cannot see that noble Lords opposite, or even those who dignify themselves by the name "free-fooders," are likely to help us in any degree.

I should just like to say that I have felt very deeply the position in which supporters of His Majesty's Government have been placed. It is quite true, as I have said, that the trumpets give an uncertain sound, and that whenever the subject is discussed we find some members of His Majesty's Government who lead us to hope for strong measures, and others who, on the contrary, limit very strictly the hopes of those who support them. But there have been, especially last night, one or two statements made by Ministers which I confess have given me considerable consolation, and have led me to hope for better things before long. There was, for instance, the speech of my noble friend Lord Selborne. That speech has been described by some as a speech throughout in favour of protection. I am not quite sure that I could go so far as that in the description of it, but there was one element in it to which I should like to draw the attention of the House. We have had no more eloquent statement of the difficulties in which the country now finds itself; we have had no more eloquent refutation of the allegation which was made on the other side of the House that this country is at present in an exceptionally favourable and prosperous condition. But the more my noble friend argued that trade is decreasing, that our industries are in danger, and that a state of things has arisen which calls for a remedy, the more I think does he invite upon himself the retort that the Government in that case should provide some effectual remedy for the state of things which now exists.

What is the remedy which the Government propose? It is negotiation. Well, the power of negotiation they possess at present. It is retaliation. Well, retaliation, as I understand it, means the power of imposing a protective duty in reply to one imposed against us by a foreign country. But my noble friends say that retaliation does not mean protection. The noble Marquess Lord Salisbury, whose appearance in this House was an event of great and deep interest to those who, for many reasons, would have recalled to their memories recollections of his illustrious father, and whom we all congratulate on his success, told us, not only that there was no protection in retaliation, but that there was not even a protective flavour. I have heard of the odour of sanctity but I have never heard of a protective flavour. However that may be, I imagine he meant that retaliation, in his view, could be carried out without any protection at all. That I very much doubt. I quite understand that protection pure and simple means protective duties all round. I quite understand also that retaliation may be said not to be simple protection, because it means merely imposing one duty *ad hoc* as a *quid pro quo* in the case of a duty imposed against us. Be that as it may, I take it that my noble friend Lord Salisbury has told us that there is to be no protection, and we have already heard that there is to be no preference. But is there to be no preference? I do not know whether it is in order to refer to a speech made in the other House, but the Secretary of State for the Colonies in a speech there, after detailing the policy and the position of the Government, made a pathetic appeal to the supporters of the Government. He begged and implored them—it is not necessary to implore me, because I should not do it in any case—under no circumstances to forget that there was this preference behind. I think his expression was that he would never take his eye off that preference. Then my noble friend Lord Selborne said that he hoped we should not put any ban on preference. I hope we shall not.

I have ventured to make these few remarks because I think that the arguments which have been used by those who have attacked His Majesty's Government have come from those who do not believe in the necessities of the situation, who do not believe in providing any remedies for those necessities. I wish merely to put the case, which I do with all respect, from the opposite point of view. There may be no Member of your Lordships' House who agrees with me, but I believe that the Government will not be able to confine themselves to the limited policy which they have laid before Parliament. I venture with all respect to agree with what fell from the noble Earl on the Woolsack. I am not sure that I realised all his views, but I have never heard him quoted as a very strong free-trader, and I think that so far he left the argumentative part of the question. He simply informed us that it was not the duty of the Government to lay down the conditions of any policy which was not before the House. We know that the policy before the House is a very limited one. His Majesty's Government have told us that the policy now before the House, which they admit is before the House,—viz., the policy of negotiation, and what I may term contingent retaliation, is the only policy which they mean to supmit to the electors of the country. It is impossible for His Majesty's Government to limit the scope of the consideration of such a question as this within the lines which they have laid down for themselves, not only because it would not be easy under any circumstances, but because a much larger, a much fuller, and I venture to say, a much worthier policy has been already laid before the country by the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Colonies. The country is in possession of that policy; they have discussed it, and they are about to discuss it; and in my opinion, which perhaps is not worth having, the country will adopt towards that policy an attitude not entirely unfavourable to the views of my right hon. friend. Of course, if His Majesty's Government lay down their policy—their limited policy as I venture to call it—and pit it against that of the ex-Colonial Secretary, no doubt the country will be able to decide, but I am afraid His Majesty's Government are deceiving themselves if they believe that the discussion in the country, both up to and during the election, will be limited to the proposals they have made. I am afraid they will find themselves mistaken. I say this in all honesty, and not in any spirit of antagonism to my noble friends who are members of the Government or to the Government itself. On the contrary, I realise all the difficulties which the Prime Minister had to face. I admit that he was not only Prime Minister, but also the leader of a Party, and I am far from saying that he was not right and that he did not exercise the highest duties of statesmanship in limiting the policy to what he believed would be endorsed by the majority of his Party, leaving further developments to the future. But I am afraid he deceives himself if he thinks that the people of this country have forgotten his own utterances. They believe that the Prime Minister is favourable—he had admitted it very often—to the policy of

Mr. Chamberlain. They know and they understand—and nobody blames him for it—that he says it is a policy which it will take a long time to develop, and upon which the electors of this country will require a considerable amount of education. But, as I said before, I think His Majesty's Government will do well if between this and the general election—which I hope will be long postponed—they reconsider their policy in the sense of augmenting and strengthening it. I can only say that, as far as I am concerned, and I know I express the views of many Members of your Lordships' House and of Members of the other House, any strengthening of that policy would be viewed with gratification. I trust that before long the Government will see that they are more likely to enjoy the support of the country if they will go " the whole hog "—I hardly like to use the term, but I know no other way of expressing it—or at all events if they will advance some further step towards the realisation of what I believe will prove in the end to be the policy to the best advantage of the people of this country, and by which I believe they will secure the strong support of the constituencies throughout the Kingdom.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I do not regret that I gave way to the noble Earl when I rose to address your Lordships a short time ago. The noble Earl's speech is one which, I think, has made an impression on your Lordships. It was what I may call the speech of a candid friend of the Government, and certainly a very independent speech. But why is it that on this great national question the independent supporters of the Government are so silent? It is a remarkable thing that, with two exceptions—and they were not warm supporters of the Government—not a single independent Peer has spoken on the opposite side. We had a very able speech from the noble and learned Lord (Lord Robertson), but he is an ex-member of the Government. We have now had a speech, as I have said, from a candid friend, but the noble Earl is also an ex-member of the Government. Why is it, I repeat, that on this great national question the independent supporters of the Government do not express their opinions? Is it that they disagree with His Majesty's Government, or is it for some other reason? Can it be, I hardly think so on such a great question, a justification of what I said on the opening night of the session, when complimenting the mover and seconder of the Address, that the atmosphere of this House was not conducive or encouraging to debate. My noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in very kindly terms, differed from me on that subject, but I still adhere to what I said.

We have had, nevertheless, a remarkable debate. We had a very interesting speech from the noble Lord the late Secretary for Scotland; we also had an interesting speech from my noble friend the noble Duke, on the personal part that they played in the changes in the Government. I shall not discuss the attitude they took up, nor the attitude of the Prime Minister towards them. But I think I may observe, with the approval of everyone in this House, that what they have said is honourable to them, and that everybody believes that they acted in the spirit of honourable statesmen doing their duty, as they conceived it, to their Party and their country. The attitude of the noble Duke and that of the noble Lord who sits near him is of great importance. The reasons they have given for separating themselves from the Government of which they were such strong supporters, show what an extraordinary position His Majesty's Government is in, and how very vague and dangerous an attitude the Government take towards this great question of free trade or protection. My noble friend behind me, Lord Crewe, put a specific Motion relating to one part of the subject, but, considering how much this part of the subject bears on all the larger questions connected with free trade and protection, it was natural that the debate should run into other parts of the question.

Though I shall not trouble your Lordships at great length at this late hour of the night, I must refer to one or two of the points which have been raised, and I shall also have a word to say with regard to retaliation and negotiation. Those of your Lordships who are free-traders rejoiced to hear the noble Marquess (Lord Salisbury) speak with no faltering voice in favour of free trade and against protection, but it is worth while noticing that the speech of the noble Marquess hardly coincided with that of the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty. I am not going to say that the First Lord of the Admiralty made a completely protectionist speech; but, if I am not mistaken, in his speech there were echoes from the arguments of the great man who has been stumping the country. Although no doubt the noble Earl very ably expressed them in his own words, still his speech contained a great many of the views which Mr. Chamberlain has urged. More than one noble Lord has referred to something I said on the opening night with regard to this question. I am stated to have admitted that the trade of the country was not as satisfactory as it should be. I entirely deny that I said anything of the sort. What I said—I am quoting from the report in *The Parliamentary Debates*—was—

> "There are continual declarations from the President of the Board of Trade and others that the trade of the country is declining, but I am convinced this is an entirely erroneous view, and that trade was never more prosperous in this country, though I admit that some changes may be necessary, for we have to meet a keen and active competition from other nations, and must look to ourselves to see we are fully armed for the struggle."

We may compare this question to illness; we find that there are degrees of illness. It may be necessary for a man to undergo a serious operation to save his life, or his illness may be a very trifling matter. Can anybody say that at the present moment the state of trade and commerce in this country shows signs so ominous, to use the expression of the First Lord of the Admiralty, that a remedy of the greatest possible severity must be applied? Yet to upset the whole fiscal policy of the country is a proposal analagous to the most serious operations in surgery. Lesser evils which may demand consideration do not call for any such treatment. When I speak of the necessity of technical education, I cannot help having in mind the example of Switzerland. That country, mountainous, and with no harbours, has yet been most successful in industrial competition, because enormous attention has there been paid to technical education.

As to the comparisons that have been made between the state of trade in this country now and in former years it will be remembered that in the early period of this discussion one famous comparison, which dealt with a period of inflation following on the Franco-German war, has been shown to be entirely erroneous. We do not hear of that kind of comparison now. How is the comparison made now? The progress of our commerce is now compared with that of other countries, but I venture to say that that is false matter of comparison. The First Lord of the Admiralty has said that sixty years ago we were commercially supreme and had no rivals. But is it to be expected that nowadays we are to have no rivals? Our trade and commerce have reached such enormous dimensions that we cannot expect that we should increase it in the proportions we did formerly. I would compare the increase of our trade and commerce with what takes place with regard to other matters. Take the speed of trains. In early days, when trains only went twenty miles an hour, it was not difficult to increase the speed to thirty miles. But now, when we have reached a speed of sixty miles, it is exceedingly difficult and expensive to augment it. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty will, I am sure, admit the same argument with regard to the speed of battleships and cruisers. The speed could be pretty easily increased when those ships went at twelve knots, but when they reach twenty-two knots, it is very difficult, if not impossible, without incurring tremendous expense, to increase the speed. It is the same with regard to our trade and commerce. Our trade and commerce, as I have said, have reached such great dimensions that we cannot expect that the same proportion of increase should be maintained. On the other hand, our neighbours, owing to great activity and also to great intelligence and learning, have been able to improve their position. Their position was not nearly as advanced as ours, so that they are therefore advancing at this moment in far larger proportion than this country. I cannot share the forebodings of evil which seem to fill the mind of the First Lord of the Admiralty. It is true that our trade and commerce are not increasing at the same rate that they did twenty years ago, for the reasons I have given, but I believe they were never more prosperous than at present.

Referring to the pamphlet on "Insular Free Trade" which the Prime Minister issued not long ago, what, I ask, is the Premier's test of a nation's prosperity? The amount of its imports. He says clearly that exports are only required in order to enable us to obtain imports. If, then, our imports continue to increase we need not trouble ourselves about exports. This clearly follows from Mr. Balfour's own arguments. He also says emphatically that the wealth of the country is greater and better diffused than at any previous period. Why, then, should we risk anything? People do not run great risks except when they are suffering great evils. The shipping question, which is one of the most important of the questions connected with the subject of free trade and protection, has been scarcely referred to during the debate. Yet our shipping trade is marvellous in its proportions, and it is increasing enormously still. We are in no way going back. We are the great carriers for the whole world, and it is, I believe, the fact that British steamships have increased 1,000,000 tons every five years since 1870. That is an important evidence of the prosperity of this country, and I think we ought to be very careful to do nothing which would interfere with the prosperity of the shipping trade, for, as the noble Earl opposite will, I know, agree, its prosperity is not only of vital importance to the commerce of the country, but also as the great nursery for and helpmeet to our great Navy.

Free trade has given our shipbuilders access to the cheapest and best materials in the world. And consider how diverse these materials are. As Sir Christopher Furness recently pointed out, the steel is made from ore produced in Spain and Sweden, the brass from Spanish and American copper, the spelter comes from Germany, the woodwork from America and Norway, the ropes from Russia, and the hemp from the Phillipines. Is not that evidence of what enormous importance free imports are to trade in this country? I sincerely hope that nothing that His Majesty's Government may do, and nothing that Mr. Chamberlain can do, will in any way check that great volume of trade which is carried all over the world by our shipping, and which is of such gigantic importance to our influence, power, and wealth. The noble Earl argued that we could not trace the commencement of our commercial prosperity to the period after the introduction of free trade. Well, I venture to say he has overlooked a great deal in making that statement. He has overlooked the state in which the country was at that time. He began by referring to the year 1846.

* The EARL OF SELBORNE: 1847.

* EARL SPENCER: The noble Earl seemed to have forgotten that long before that Sir Robert Peel commenced his great reform of the tariff. From 1842 he made enormous changes, which had very great effect on the whole of the country. The noble Earl quoted Sir Robert Peel before he became a convert to free trade, and I might quote numerous passages from the speeches of Mr. Chamberlain, in which the right hon. Gentleman most eloquently and clearly put the very arguments which we wish to enforce to-day. I should like to quote what was said by a very great man, and a man whose name will carry weight. Speaking at Edinburgh, on 2nd December, 1845, Lord Macaulay, referring to the condition of the country in 1841 said—

> "Will anybody tell me that the capitalist was the only sufferer, or the chief sufferer? Have we forgotten what was the condition of the working people in that unhappy year? So visible was the misery of the manufacturing towns that a man of sensibility could hardly bear to pass through them. Everywhere he found filth and nakedness, and plaintive voices, and wasted forms and haggard faces. Politicians, who had never been thought alarmists, began to tremble for the very foundations of society. First the mills were put on short time. Then they ceased to work at all. Then went to pledge the scanty property of the artisan; first his little luxuries, then his comforts, then his necessaries. The hovels were stripped until they were as bare as the wigwam of a Dogribbed Indian. Alone amidst the general misery, the shop with three golden balls prospered, and was crammed from cellar to garret with the clocks and the kettles, and the blankets and the Bibles of the poor. I remember well the effect which was produced in London by the unwonted sight of huge pieces of cannon which were going northward to overawe the starving population of Lancashire."

Is that a picture of prosperity? Does that show that before free trade came in the country was in a very prosperous condition. On the contrary, it shows—

and I could quote the opinions of others to the same effect—that the condition of affairs was most deplorable in the country, and such as nothing, to my mind, but free trade was able to put straight.

Now, my Lords, I come to the actual Resolution which my noble friend behind me has proposed. We have heard a great deal about retaliation, and I hope we shall hear something more from the noble Marquess the Leader of the House, who, I presume, will wind up the debate. We understand perfectly well the policy of Mr. Chamberlain. We understand what my noble friend Lord Cadogan supports. But, as has been pointed out, time after time, we cannot understand the position of His Majesty's Government. They have two views. I hardly think the free-trade opinions which were expressed by the noble Marquess the Lord Privy Seal were at all echoed in the speech of the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty. Now, what is retaliation? We have heard it described to-night, and up to a certain point we understand what is meant by retaliation; but can retaliation be called a policy? I rather think that retaliation is a weapon by which you can carry out a policy. We do not know how His Majesty's Government are going to carry out their policy. It may be done in various ways. They may proceed by Act of Parliament, giving power to the King in Council to act in certain circumstances, following the precedent contained in the Navigation Laws. I cannot help thinking that the refusal of His Majesty's Government to accept the clear proposal of my noble friend implies that they intend to have some general power of this sort, which will avoid their having to come to Parliament in each case. Why are they so afraid of the little word "each?"

If we do not have it to-night, we must have before long, certainly before an appeal is made to the country, the clear, definite, and cohesive opinion of the Government. The noble Earl said there was a want of cohesion on the part of the Government. I entirely agree. We have heard more than once that members of a Government may differ in opinion, and I quite agree that on certain questions they may differ. There are certain questions which may be considered open questions. Take, for instance, a very important Irish question—that of an Irish Catholic University. We know that in Lord Salisbury's Government there were various views on that subject; but that is a perfectly open question. It was not going to be made a question to be taken up by the Government. But I do not consider that this is a question which can be treated as an open question upon which a divergence of opinion among members of the Cabinet may be tolerated. It is a question upon which the Government and every politician must have a clear and decided view. It is not a question on which there can be two, four, or five views in the Cabinet. I will not detain your Lordships further, but I would impress upon His Majesty's Government the absolute necessity of clearing up their position, and stating whether they are going to support indirectly, if not directly, the policy of Mr. Chamberlain, which is protection, or whether they are going only to support retaliation and negotiation. If they are only going to support retaliation and negotiation, then I say they must define exactly what they are going to do, otherwise it will be impossible for the constituencies in the country to come to a correct vote and decision on this question, which is of such vital interest and importance to the whole kingdom.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess OF LANSDOWNE): My Lords, this discussion has ranged over a wide field, and at this hour of the night it is scarcely possible for me to go over the whole of it. We have listened to the important and interesting statements of the reasons which induced two of our colleagues to leave us recently. We have had a critical examination of the Motion and the Amendment; we have had a full discussion of the Government policy; and we have had a considerable amount of controversy with regard to another policy which is not that of His Majesty's Government, and with which they do not associate themselves. With regard to the two speeches which have been delivered to us upon the resignations, I can only say this, that I listened to them, as I am sure my friends on this side of the House listened to them, with a deep sense of the depth of feeling with which those speeches were uttered and of the absolute sincerity with which they were characterised. We have great regret in parting from the friends and allies with whom we were associated so long, and as we listened to them we could not help feeling how great a loss this Bench has sustained in eloquence and ability by their defection. There is only one circumstance in which I am inclined to find consolation in the speeches of my noble friends. They made it perfectly clear to us that they left us under circumstances which rendered it absolutely impossible that they should continue to be our colleagues. There can be no question of their having left us owing to one of those momentary misunderstandings which sometimes lead to decisions forming the subject of lifelong regret. It is said of our first parents when they found themselves turning their backs upon the Garden of Eden that—

> "Some natural tears they shed yet wiped them soon."

I think we may say that of our colleagues. They have gone forth like our first parents to till the earth, and we can only hope that the furrows which they trace may not be found to diverge too widely from ours.

As to the policy of the Government, we have been interrogated with a closeness and a persistency which I do not think I have ever seen equalled in the discussions in this House. The endeavour of our critics is to show to us that our policy means either nothing at all or else protection. Our policy does mean something, and that something is not protection. If one could find amusement in these things, I am almost amused at the persistent efforts which have been made to tar us with the brush of protection. I believe it is true that in some parts of Africa there are native officials whose business it is to smell out witches, and I think noble Lords opposite and their friends make it their business to smell out protection in all sorts of quarters where it does not exist. Sometimes it is a humble Under-Secretary, sometimes it is the Colonial Secretary, sometimes it is the First Lord of the Admiralty, and sometimes it is the Prime Minister himself. None of us are safe, and we must congratulate ourselves on the fact that up to the present moment none of us have been done to death by our inquisitors. We say that we are not protectionists, but free-traders. We say that our interpretation of free trade is as true an interpretation and founded on as high an authority as yours. Your theory is that if other nations freely supply us it does not in the least matter whether we are allowed to supply them; you keep your eyes permanently upon the importer and the consumer, and allow the producer and exporter to take chances for themselves. That is not, I believe, sound political economy, or, for the matter of that, sound sense. We hold, on the contrary, that you can only have free trade if the course of commerce is allowed to flow freely along its natural channels and when the country which gives and the country which receives are both allowed to reap the full advantage of natural conditions. We are not content with your theory of free trade; we believe, on the contrary, that the limited free trade which has contented you has been the cause of serious injury to our commerce, and we agree with my noble friend Lord Salisbury, who, I think, with great presence of mind succeeded in taking the sense of the House last night and in obtaining an opinion *nemine contradicente*, that all is not well with the trade of this country.

Leaving for the moment the question of theory, I would lay before your Lordships very briefly indeed one or two facts which seem to me to support the contentions which I have just urged. The first fact is this—that during recent years there has been a steady tendency on the part of all foreign countries to raise their tariffs against us. I will not trouble your Lordships with too many figures, but in 1879 the German tariff was raised to a protective level; in 1881 the Russian tariff was increased; in 1882 there was a general increase of the Austro-Hungarian duties; in 1884 there was a further increase of the Russian tariff; in 1885 there was a further increase of the German tariff; in 1887 the Russian duties were again increased; in 1888 the Italian duties were increased; in 1890 the McKinley Tariff was introduced in the United States, and there was a further increase of the Russian tariff; in 1892 there was some reduction in the tariffs of central European Powers, but the French, Spanish, and Portuguese duties were increased; and in 1897 the United States scale of duties was largely increased. The second fact is that the effect of these successive heightenings of the tariff wall has been to divert our trade, to some extent at all events, from protected countries to those which are not protected; and the third fact which I would draw attention to is this, that at this very moment the European Powers are contemplating a still further addition to their hostile tariffs.

We are frequently told that what is called the "most-favoured-nation treatment" is sufficient protection for us against these dangers. My noble friend Lord Selborne very properly pointed out that the most-favoured-nation treatment has ceased to be a protection against hostile tariffs, and the reason is not far to seek. In these days the tendency is towards very minute classification of tariffs, with the result that when two Powers wish to make a commercial agreement between themselves, excluding from its advantages a third Power entitled to most-favoured-nation treatment, they can easily do so by a process known to experts as gerrymandering the tariff. The thing has in fact been constantly done to our disadvantage. I may mention an instance of this. In 1892 the central Powers of Europe revised their commercial treaties, and, although we had at that moment an export trade to Germany of no less than 675,000,000 marks, only 2·6 per cent. of that large trade obtained any relief under the most-favoured-nation treatment to which we were entitled. Of course, besides that there are other devices, such as preferential railway rates, frontier dues, and in certain cases interpretations of the most-favoured nation clause which have the effect of whittling away its meaning and importance. It is in these circumstances that we desire, instead of relying upon most-favoured-nation treatment — instead of being content with what I might call the by-products of arrangements entered into by other Powers—to bargain for ourselves. Having learned from experience that in such cases mere expostulation and remonstrance are not enough, we desire to obtain from the country the authority to use arguments of another kind, to which we believe the countries with which we should have to deal will not be so ready to turn a deaf ear. When we reflect that this country takes from other countries imports valued at something over £400,000,000, we are led to the conclusion that we ought to be able to use arguments of the kind which I have indicated not without effect. Action of this kind has been characterised as "bluff." My Lords, I am under the impression that the word bluff is used without sufficient knowledge of its proper significance. That may perhaps be due to our innocence and unfamiliarity with the game from which I believe the expression originates, because I am assured that the word "bluff" can only be applied correctly when you make believe to hold in your hand good cards which you have, in fact, not got in it. I maintain that a country which draws £400,000,000 of imports from other countries cannot be made subject to the accusation that it is "bluffing," but that it has, on the contrary, a strong hand if it only knows how to play it.

Then I am asked—and I have been severely catechised on this point—how we propose to apply our policy of negotiation and retaliation; and constant efforts have been made by one speaker after another to lure us—I was almost going to say to goad us—into premature and indiscreet disclosures as to the manner in which such a policy may be applied. I think I am right in saying that my noble and learned friend Lord James cited the case of boots, and said—

> "You will be asked when you go into your village, 'What are you going to do about boots?'"

Seriously, does the noble and learned Lord believe that we were coming to this House to tell your Lordships how two or three years hence the Government of the day is going to deal with the question of boots, or with German toys, or any of the other commodities which have been mentioned by different speakers this evening? I object to these revelations, not merely because of the tactical advantage which noble Lords opposite seek to derive from them, but because I venture to think that on principle it would be absolutely wrong that any such announcement should be made.

I am going to make a personal appeal. I imagine that the audience which I have the honour of addressing probably contains in it the noble Lord who, when you have driven us from power, will replace me in the office which I now have the honour of filling. I do not know in what part of the House to look for him. But I will appeal to him to join me in protesting against the attempt to force the Foreign Office into indiscreet and improper disclosures of action which is at present remote from us. There is, however, one point upon which I will attempt to shed a ray of light with reference to a remark made by Lord Tweedmouth. He suggested that we should obviously begin by taking in hand those Powers whose tariffs were highest, and then he pointed out that those particular Powers were precisely the Powers from which we took foodstuffs and raw materials: and, therefore, the argument was, "You will be obliged to tax foodstuffs and raw materials." Now it does not in the least follow that because of two Powers one has a higher tariff than the other it is the higher tariff that is really most effectual for the purpose of excluding your commodities. Take two Powers, one with an *ad valorem* tariff of 100 per cent. and the other with an *ad valorem* tariff of 20 per cent. If the Power which has the higher tariff does not produce the commodities which you desire to export to it, those commodities will find their way into that country in spite of its high tariff. If, on the other hand, the Power which imposes the 20 per cent. duty does produce the commodities which you produce, and is therefore a competitor with you, the low rate of 20 per cent. will be effective for the purpose of keeping out your commodities. Therefore we must not run away with the assumption which has been more than once made, that it is necessarily with the Powers whose tariffs are highest that we shall be primarily concerned.

Then we have been asked what reason we have for believing that our policy will have the effects we desire from it. We were challenged last night to produce a single case in which retaliation had been tried and found successful. We have just laid on the Table a Blue-book giving an account of certain tariff wars that have lately taken place, and I would call your Lordships' attention to this extract from the report on the conflict between Germany and Russia—

> "A review of the conditions under which the struggle was conducted . . . makes it appear doubtful whether ordinary negotiations without the sanction of force would ever have led to a satisfactory compromise, or whether the protective policy of the two nations would ever have been modified except after the experience of the results of protection in its extremest form."

I do not, however, for a moment suggest that you should leave out of account the injurious results of those tariff wars and their disturbing effects on the trade of the world. All wars are at best but clumsy and cruel contrivances, and a tariff war does not differ from a war of another kind. No one in his senses would embark with a light heart on such a war; nor do we desire for a moment to provoke hostilities of that kind all over the world. All that we contend is that unless we can contemplate as a last resort the use of measures of this sort it will be impossible for us to hold our own in commercial negotiations with the foreign Powers whose attacks upon our commerce we have so much reason to apprehend.

But there is another illustration of the success with which the policy of negotiation may be resorted to which is more conclusive and encouraging. I refer to the Cobden Treaty of 1860. When that treaty was negotiated we were able for very a very small sacrifice indeed to obtain considerable concessions from France. The result was that our exports to France rose from £32,000,000 in 1859 to £81,000,000 in 1874. But more than that, the example of that treaty and of our treaty also with Austria which followed it soon after was contagious. Commercial treaties were entered into between other Powers, something like fifty or sixty such agreements being concluded, with the result that there was a general and, to us, most advantageous lowering of tariffs throughout Europe. The time came when we returned to a much stricter view of those matters and when the policy of commercial treaties fell into disfavour. From that time, although we repeatedly reduced our taxation, we did so without inviting any corresponding concessions in return. Nay, more. When overtures were made to us we allowed them to pass by unheeded, with the result that not only our trade sustained serious detriment, but that we came to be regarded, and, indeed, have been regarded until last year, as a negligible quantity in all transactions with regard to commercial matters between one Power and another. I say that, knowing what I am talking about, because in their candid moments the representatives of foreign commerce do not hesitate to tell us with the utmost frankness that in such matters as the conclusion of commercial treaties, or the classification of commodities, the opinion of this country has been regarded with complete indifference.

Then we are asked why it is that we require a mandate in order that we may carry out our policy of negotiation and retaliation. We are told that there is nothing whatever to prevent us negotiating, or for the matter of that, retaliating at the present moment. I daresay that is perfectly true, but I would remind noble Lords opposite of a very recent incident. We entered into a Sugar Convention; we did so, it is quite true, without a mandate; but what was the result? We were hauled over the coals by the noble Earl and the noble Lord who sits by him and by the President of the Cobden Club, because we were told that we were breaking all the rules of the game and taking upon ourselves to adopt a policy which was in direct opposition to the recognised policy and principles of this country. Well, we do not want to be exposed to those kind animadversions in the future; and, when the noble and learned Lord asks us what extra authority we want, I say we want the extra authority which will be derived from a clear and emphatic pronouncement of opinion by the constituencies of this country. But we have no intention—and I cannot conceive why noble Lords should be so uneasy upon that point—we have no intention whatever of endeavouring to withdraw these matters from the cognisance or control of Parliament. We could not do so if we wished—and that is the best answer we can give. Noble Lords talk about our asking for a blank cheque; I do not suppose for a moment that Parliament could give us a blank cheque; but, if it were to give us a blank cheque, and we were to fill it up in an improper manner, do you imagine that Parliament would overlook it? We should have to answer to Parliament and submit to their authority. It is perfectly true that treaties are the prerogatives of the Crown, and that, strictly speaking, their confirmation by Parliament is not absolutely necessary; but the treaty and the law of the land must be in harmony, and if the law of the land does not harmonise with the treaty, then you must legislate, and you at once bring yourself under the control of Parliament, and that no doubt is why in all commercial treaties the formula usually employed is that the Sovereign undertakes, not to make such and such an arrangement, but to recommend the arrangement to Parliament.

I wish to say one word with regard to the statement that has been so often made—that our policy, which has been a good deal belittled by the critics, will inevitably lead us to the Birmingham policy. And I wish to answer a challenge which I think was thrown down by the noble and learned Lord, who asked us whether we adhered to the statement which was made by the Home Secretary in the House of Commons. My Lords, we do adhere to it. The statement was this—

> "The Government have no intention of taxing raw materials, and their policy does not include the taxation of food; neither do the Government propose the imposition of any taxation for the purpose of fostering a home industry which is subjected only to natural and legitimate competition."

*LORD ROBERTSON: That is not what I referred to. I referred to a categorical Question put by Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell on the eve of the division, and the categorical answer was that the Government were opposed to any tax on food or raw materials.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I have not the slightest objection to accept that statement also.

*LORD ROBERTSON: They slightly differ—I desire a direct affirmation from the noble Lord to that, my reason being the variance among Ministerialist statements during that debate.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am afraid it would be absolutely impossible for me to say anything more distinct than that I accept Mr. Akers Douglas's statement to which the noble and learned Lord drew my attention; and I say categorically, that we, as a Government, and we cannot speak except as a Government, are opposed to a duty on raw materials or foodstuffs. Why is it that we are told that our policy leads inevitably down an inclined plane to the Birmingham abyss? I say, on the contrary, our policy is a self-contained policy. It is quite within our power to stop short at it. It is a policy which is intelligible without the assumption that it involves anything that it does not already comprise. And I say more; I say not only is it a self-contained policy, but I believe that instead of leading to Birmingham it leads if anything in the opposite direction. I was rather interested by an argument used by Lord Crewe on the first night, when he set himself to work to demolish another argument which had been used by the noble Duke below the gangway in regard to that point. The noble Earl was at pains to show that it would be possible to graft the Government policy on to the Birmingham policy. I think the noble Duke was perfectly right. As far as it goes our policy is inconsistent with the policy of colonial preference, and for this reason: If your policy of retaliation and negotiation succeeds, it means that you will have entered into agreements with foreign powers by which, in return for the facilities which you give to their trade, they will give you facilities for yours; and surely it is not unreasonable to argue that the more the ground is covered with treaties between this country and foreign Powers, treaties maintaining a permanent open door for our products in foreign countries, the less, and not the more, easy will it be to make preferential arrangements with the Colonies.

What I have to say with regard to this question of colonial preference—it is not before the House, and I shall not examine it at length—is that, although it forms no part of our policy, and if you were to propose it to us now, we should certainly oppose it, we do not desire to be held bound that at no future time and under no circumstances will we any of us have anything to do with commercial arrangements between the mother country and the Colonies. We are not prepared to say that we are going, as soon as we are permitted to do so, to enter into mutually advantageous arrangements with foreign countries—but that, in no circumstances, and at no time, can we contemplate the possibility of such mutually advantageous arrangements being made between this country and the Colonies to which we owe so much. I therefore rejoice that this question, although it forms no part of our programme to-day, should be undergoing the greatest amount of free examination and discussion. If that discussion should bring to light hereafter the possibility of doing something which will draw the Colonies more closely towards us, I shall be the first to rejoice. If, on the other hand, the result is to show that nothing can be done, then I hope the attempt will be abandoned with the goodwill and concurrence of both sides. If this were to happen the project would at all events be decently and respectfully laid aside. But that is a widely different thing from throwing it still-born upon the dust-heap, which is the policy which noble Lords opposite recommend.

Having those feelings, I object altogether to the proposal of Lord Robertson that we should endeavour to impose upon our supporters what he called a superior limit in regard to this question. Let me state in half-a-dozen simple words how I understand that superior limit would work if we were to apply it. It would mean this, that we should prefer a candidate who differed from us upon nine points out of ten, and who, upon this fiscal question, agreed with us partially and reluctantly, to another candidate who agreed with us on nine points out of ten and who differed from us in regard to fiscal policy only because he wished to travel rather faster and rather further than we did. Holding those views, we shall not support the Motion of the noble Lord opposite. We may be wrong, but we regard its language as ambiguous and disengenuous. We prefer our own formula, in which we have put on record, in the most unequivocal terms, our desire that this question should not be withdrawn from the control of Parliament and in which, because we respect the authority of Parliament, we refuse to be parties to an attempt to bind the discretion of a Parliament which is not yet in existence and of a Government which, for all we know, may never have a being.

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion, their Lordships divided.

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On Question, Amendment agreed to.

House Adjourned at Twelve o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 19th February, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Surrey Commercial Dock Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Onslow Square; Moss Side; Rivington; Wallsend; Saffron Walden; Parton; Hatch Beauchamp; Heart Brook; Wolverhampton; Gosport; Havant; Newburn; West Cramlington; Preston (two); Winchmore Hill; Cartmel; Dewsbury; West Allotment; Deptford; Alexander M'Nabb and others; North Walbottle; Mostyn; Port Talbot; Plasmore; Eastbourne; Clayton le Moors; Mossy Lea; Greenock; Noel Park; Belmont; Llangranog; Hermon; Bedford; Tynant; Women's Christian Temperance Association; Manchester; Anfield; Capel Drindod; Five Oak Green; South Ockenden; Dolton; Llandilo; Llanwchllyn; Liverpool; Carmarthen; Falmouth; Measham; East Somerset; Melbourne; and New Barnet; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Washford, against; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA (CHINESE LABOUR).

Petition from Guildford, against establishment; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (NEW SCHEME OF TRAINING).

Copy presented, of Reports of Members of the Interview Committee on the selection of Candidates for nominations as Naval Cadets [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Loan Societies.—Abstract of Accounts of Loan Societies in England and Wales to 31st December, 1902, furnished to the Central Office for the Registry of Friendly Societies [by Act].

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Tanat Valley Railway—Increased Government Grant.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if, in view of the increased cost of the Tanat Valley Railway in excess of the original estimate, he will recommend an increased Government grant towards the alleviation of the extra local taxation incurred by the local authority.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) This matter is one for the Treasury. If application is made to that Department, and the Board of Trade should be consulted thereon, I will give full consideration to all the circumstances of the case.

Increased Harbour Accommodation at Anstruther, Fife.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the amount of harbour accommodation at Anstruther, Fife, for meeting the present requirements, and to the fact that fishing boats from all parts of Scotland are hampered in their operations, and frequently suffer damage, owing to the congested state of that harbour; and whether he will instruct the Board of Trade Harbour Department to send an engineer to Anstruther, Fife, to examine and report as to the best means of providing increased harbour accommodation there.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) My attention has not been called to the insufficiency of the harbour accommodation to meet present requirements, and the Board of Trade are not in a position to appoint an engineer to advise upon an increase of accommodation; that is a matter which should be undertaken by those who are interested locally, but if a scheme is prepared which requires legislative or other sanction, the Department will be glad to give it full consideration.

Constitution of Consular Service.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can say what progress has been made by the Committee appointed to inquire whether reforms could be made in the manner of appointing Consuls, with a view to obtaining the services of men more familiar with commercial matters than many of our present Consuls are; and, if the Committee has reported, can he state the tenour of their Report; and whether any steps have been taken to give effect to their recommendations.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The Report of the Committee recently appointed to inquire into the Constitution of the Consular Service has been laid before Parliament. The recommendations therein contained have been approved by the Secretary of State subject to slight modifications, and he is in communication with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury with a view to giving effect to them as soon as possible.

Aliens Working in British Coal Mines.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that 4,000 Polish Jews are working in the coal mines of Great Britain, most of whom cannot speak English, and of the danger involved thereby to the safety of the lives of British miners, he proposes to take any steps to prevent these aliens working in British coal mines.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) My information differs somewhat from that of the hon. Member. This matter has engaged the attention of the Home Office for some years. Careful inquiry has been made from time to time by the Mines Inspectors for Scotland, where the bulk of the foreigners are employed—some 1,200 out of a total for the whole country of less than 2,000—and there is no evidence before me to show that these men are a cause of danger to the other miners employed in the same mines. I have satisfied myself that adequate steps are taken at the mines where they are employed, to instruct them in their duties. The matter will continue to be watched by the inspectors; but on the information before me I am not prepared to take the steps suggested by the hon. Member.

MR. MARKHAM: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will grant the Return relative to Underground Mines (Great Britain) (Foreigners Employed), standing on to-day's Paper.†

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) According to the information supplied to me by the inspectors of mines, the employment of foreigners is confined to a few of the inspection districts, and the numbers employed are approximately as follows: in the two Scottish districts 1,600 Poles and a few Germans; in English districts, some ninety Italians and seventy Poles, Germans, and men of other nationalities. A special Return, the collection of which would involve a considerable amount of work, and which could not be relied on for complete accuracy, as there is no obligation to keep records on this point, appears in the circumstances to be unnecessary.

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†Underground Mines (Great Britain) (Foreigners Employed)—Address for Return stating the number of Foreigners and their nationality working in the Underground Mines in Great Britain.

Electricity in Mines—Report of Committee.

Mr. MARKHAM: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any opportunity will be given to the House to discuss the departmental recommendations of the Electricity in Mines Committee Report, presented to this House on 28th January; and will he say when the minutes of evidence will be available for the use of Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am not aware of any reason for departing from ordinary Parliamentary procedure in this matter. I appointed the Committee to advise me on the subject of the use of electricity in mines for the purposes of my duties under the Mines Regulation Acts, and it will be open to any hon. Member to discuss, on the Home Office Vote, the action which I take on the recommendations made by the Committee.

Irish Valuation Committee.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he can state when the Select Committee on Irish Valuation Acts, as recommended by the Select Committee of last session, will be reappointed.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I should hope next week.

Increase of Pay to Joiners in Naval Ordnance Departments.

Mr. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state why the increase of pay conceded to the joiners in His Majesty's Dockyards has not been extended to the joiners in the Naval Ordnance Departments as on previous occasions.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Lee.*) The Admiralty have recently decided that this increase of pay is to be extended to the joiners in the Naval Ordnance Departments, and the necessary instructions will shortly be issued.

Indian Native States administered by Political Agents.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he has received from the Government of India information as promised by the then Secretary of State on the 25th June† last, in answer to a Question as to how many of the native States of India, the territory of which exceeds 100 square miles, are, or up to the end of last year were, under the administrative control of political agents on account of the infancy or incapacity of the chiefs of such states; and what has been the increase in their number during the last five years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I have been informed by the Government of India that the local governments and administrations have been instructed to furnish the information. I am asking that the matter may be expedited.

Construction of Pier at Buncrana.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the question of the construction of a pier at Buncrana, county Donegal, is still engaging the attention of the Irish Government, as stated by him on the 14th August last;‡ and, if so, has any progress been made since then.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Yes, Sir; the question is still under consideration.

Irish Ancient Monuments, Greenan Hill.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the result of the negotiations between the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland and the proprietor of Greenan Hill with reference to the vesting of this ancient monument in the Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The owner of this monument has not yet intimated his willingness to vest the guardianship in the Commissioners.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv., 542.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxvii., 1296.

Gun Licences in Ireland—Case of Mr. James Flynn.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that a memorial has been presented to His Excellency signed by magistrates, Roman Catholic priests, Protestant clergymen, and other local residents in Queen's county to the number of sixty-four, recommending Mr. James Flynn, Gosbrook, Mountrath, for a gun licence, he will state upon what grounds Mr. Flynn has been refused a licence; and if he will request the resident magistrate to reconsider this application.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Mr. Flynn was informed by letter, dated the 8th instant, that the Lord-Lieutenant saw no sufficient reason for interfering with the discretion vested by law in the resident magistrate, who felt himself unable to issue a licence to the applicant.

Promotion of Police at Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of police promoted, and to what rank, since the present Commissioner of Police in Belfast took charge; and how many were Roman Catholic and Protestant.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The following promotions to the ranks mentioned have been made since 1st December, 1901:—

	Roman Catholic.	Protestant.
District Inspector	--	1
Head Constable	4	2
Sergeant	9	9
Acting Sergeant	22	17
Total	35	29

3rd. Battalion King's Royal Rifles.

CAPTAIN ELLICE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will explain why only twenty of the married men of the 3rd Battalion King's Royal Rifles, who are now under orders to proceed to Bermuda, are to be allowed to take their wives and families there; and whether he is aware that these men have been home from South Africa less than a year, having been separated from their families for three and a-half years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Accommodation for twenty families only can be found in the fortress of Bermuda for this battalion. Additional married quarters, however, are being provided in Bermuda under the Military Works Loan.

Sale of Surplus War Stores — Actual Receipts.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state how much of the £3,000,000 appropriations in aid from the sale of surplus animals, supplies, and stores is realised receipts from actual sale and how much is estimated.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The reply is that practically the whole of this amount has been actually realised and brought to credit.

Indian and Colonial Contributions to the Army.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state how much of the £200,000 increased Colonial and Indian contributions in the Army Supplementary Estimate comes from India and under what charge, and from which of the Colonies does the remainder come.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The amount is made up as follows:—Balance due from India on contribution for effective Home charges for 1902–3 (only three of the four quarterly payments have been brought to account in that year), £65,000. Increase in military contributions from Hong-Kong £11,000, and Straits Settlements £24,000 (owing to rise in dollar and growth of revenues), £35,000. Miscellaneous credits arising on the adjustment of the South African War Accounts, £100,000.

Erection of Barracks at Dingwall.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that although the depôt of the 3rd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia) is nominally at Dingwall, part of the staff only is stationed in that town, the arms and clothing of the battalion being kept at Fort George, where the battalion is trained; and will he consider the expediency of arranging for the erection of barracks in the vicinity of Dingwall so that the whole of the battalion may be accommodated near the county town.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) There is no present intention of building barracks at Dingwall.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[FOURTEENTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:— .

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil), in moving an Amendment expressing regret that His Majesty's advisers had not seen fit to recommend the creation of a Department and Minister of Labour, said there was always a difficulty in convincing a large and influential class section of the community that there was such a thing as the unemployed trouble. The assumption was that men who were able and willing to work could always get work. If that were the case there would be no reason whatever for troubling the House of Commons with the question, but unfortunately the assumption was not correct. Further, the theory was sometimes propounded that the unemployed were in the main confined to great centres of unskilled and sweated labour like the East End of London. That also was incorrect. The figures of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade showed that in 1903 the percentage of unemployed of all trades making a return was 5·1. In the building trades (in 1902) it was 4·2, in the shipbuilding trade 5·5, and in the printing and bookbinding trades 4·6. In 1899 the corresponding figures were for all trades 2·4 per cent., for the building trades 1·3, for the shipbuilding trade 2·4, and for the printing and bookbinding trades 3·9. The object of quoting those figures was to show the fluctuation which took place in our staple industries. In Lancashire the case was exceptional. The distress in the cotton trade due to shortage of employment was due to circumstances over which unfortunately the House had no control, but he hoped that before long there would be some means of stopping the gambling in cotton options. It was a scandal that speculators should be able to gamble on the Stock Exchange not only in scrip, stock, and shares, but also in the lives and comfort of thousands of their fellow subjects. With regard to particular districts, the condition of the shipbuilding trade was a fair index of the condition of many others—for if the shipbuilding yards were full, the iron, engineering, coal, and various other trades were all benefited—and in that trade, in the districts of the Clyde, Tyne, and Wear, the tonnage under construction showed a decrease of 36 per cent. last year as compared with 1899, and that, of course, meant a considerable reduction in the number of men employed. According to the figures supplied by the principal trades unions, the number of engineers employed in the districts concerned decreased from 19,782 in 1899 to 18,966 at the end of last year, boilermakers showed a decrease of 5,000 in 1903 as compared with 1901, while the shipwrights reported a decrease of 1,520 in the same period. These figures showed that the lack of employment was not confined to the East End of London, but was general throughout the country. Nor was the problem of the unemployed a British question only; it was worldwide in its extent. In America, on the Continent of Europe, and in the Colonies, the same problem faced social reformers and statesmen, and cried aloud for solution.

It would probably be said that alien immigration was largely responsible for the present condition of affairs. It might be that in one or two specific and local cases, such as in the East End of London and in certain parts of Leeds, the foreigner did compete successfully with the British working men, and that in those cases employment for the Britisher might be more plentiful if aliens were scarcer, but that had no bearing whatever on the question he was endeavouring to put before the House. It was not alien competition, but shortage of trade, that caused lack of employment in the shipbuilding, engineering, and iron works, and the stopping of the incoming of aliens was not likely appreciably to affect the gravity of the unemployed trouble. In view of recent discussions, it would probably be said that free imports were responsible for the depression in trade. That was a stronger case. He regarded with considerable appreciation the fact that the ex-Colonial Secretary should have raised this question in the prominent way in which it had been raised of late, as it had directed attention to social and industrial problems which must be faced if our national existence was to be maintained. But the remedy propounded would but increase the trouble of which they complained. In Germany, as against our 4·4 per cent., the number out of work was 11 per cent., and in parts of America, such as the State of New York, the number for certain trades was as high as 17 per cent. The condition of the worker in those protected countries was as the position of the worker here: he got as much for his labour as his trade union and the state of the market could extort or obtain, and nothing beyond. The condition of the German worker had considerably improved within the last ten or twelve years, but the improvement was due almost entirely to the better trades union organisation of the workers, and not to the fiscal policy of the country. Protection, so far from increasing, would materially diminish the amount of employment in the country, and would make life harder for the toilers of the land. Whilst saying that, he must not be taken as accepting the point of view of those who held that free trade had solved our social problem. It had not. Much remained to be done—much that would be in direct conflict with the theories underlying the free-trade agitation. So long as nearly one-third of our population were living either in poverty or on the edge of poverty, the condition of the working classes could not be regarded as satisfactory. Free trade offered no remedy for that state of affairs: it maintained the *status quo*, but he preferred the *status quo*, bad as it was, to the horrors which obtained under protection early in the last century.

What were the powers possessed by various authorities for dealing with this question? Local authorities were straining their resources to the uttermost in the endeavour to find work for their people. But that was really no part of the duty of a local authority. Necessary works might be put in hand during periods of depression, but it was usually a costly method of carrying out local improvements. Municipal authorities should be free to carry out their improvements at times most suitable and under the best conditions, and not be more or less compelled to carry out such works during periods of trade depression, in order to tide over the workers who were otherwise unable to find employment. Boards of guardians were the only authorities at present empowered to deal with the question. The foundation of the Poor Law in England was to provide work for the able-bodied unemployed and relief for the incapable and sick. It was no part of the theory of the English Poor Law that relief should be given to the able-bodied. Boards of guardians had the powers originally conferred on the vestries, to the extent that each board might acquire 50 acres of land, establish workshops, equip those workshops with machinery, employ men at wages to carry on manufactures, and sell the produce He submitted that they could do that without any taint of Poor Law attaching to it; that was to say, no disfranchisement would follow. As showing how much England had departed from its ideal in this matter, he might quote an interesting document issued by the Secretary of State as far back as 1694—

> "Mandate issued in 1694 addressed to the Overseers of the Poor and to the Churchwardens for the setting to work of all the poor within your parishes. By virtue of this statute made in the three and fortieth year of the Reign of our late Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth for the relief of the Poor: These are to will and require you, whose names are here underwritten, that you, together with the Churchwardens of your Parish for the time being, do according to the same statute, take order from time to time, (for this year to come) for the setting to work all the Poor within your parish (as well married as unmarried) that are able to work, and have no means to maintain themselves, nor use no ordinary and daily Trade of Life to get their living by. And also for the placing out as Apprentices all such children within your said Parish as are fit to be put forth, whose parents are not able to keep and maintain them. And also for the raising of a convenient stock of Flax, Hemp, Wool, Thread, Iron and other necessary Ware and Stuff in your said Parish for that purpose; and also for the providing of necessary relief for all such Poor within your said Parish, as are Lame, Old, Blind, Impotent, and unable to work, wherein if you be found negligent, or shall fail to meet once a Month to confer together for the purpose aforesaid, then you are to forfeit 20s. apiece for every Month that you shall be found remiss or careless therein. And therefore see that you fail not in these Premises at your peril."

That was a State document issued about 1694. He hoped the day was not far distant when a similar document would be issued to local authorities carrying due punishment for remissness of duty.

What were the trades unions doing to meet this? He had quoted figures showing the number of unemployed among shipwrights, boiler-makers, and engineers. He would now quote the amount paid by them last year, not for strike pay, or superannuation, or sick benefit, but exclusively to those unable to get employment. The shipwrights paid £6,000, the boilermakers £90,000, and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers £22,000. If they turned to the Board of Trade figures for all trades unions in the ten years ending 1901 it would be found that 100 trades unions paid out-of-work benefit to the extent of £3,280,755. Out of their own pockets the trades unions helped their unfortunate fellows to the extent of nearly £3,500,000 in ten years. Surely then the State should have no hesitation in attempting to do its duty when the private individual was endeavouring to do so much. To show the gravity of this question and the importance attached to it by local authorities he wished to refer to a conference held in February last in the Guildhall. At one of its sittings it was presided over by the hon. Member for South Islington, the Member for Cambridge University being also present, as well as a good many dignitaries of the Church and gentlemen prominent in connection with local government. At that Conference there were present 587 delegates, of whom 123 were councillors sent by the various councils. The Corporation of the City of London, the London County Council, and the City and Borough Councils of such important centres as Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Bradford, Newcastle-on-Tyne and Wolverhampton were all represented. That gathering sat for two days and certain resolutions were carried. The main resolution was to the following effect—

> "That this Conference (*a*) realising that the interests of industry are the paramount interests of the community, and that the problem of the unemployed should be dealt with in a sympathetic as well as in a practical manner, urges upon the Government (*b*) the necessity of appointing a Minister of Labour with a seat in the Cabinet, one of whose duties it shall be to organise a special department of his office to deal with recurring periods of depression and distress, to watch for and to notify indications of approaching lack of employment, to supplement the Board of Trade statistics, to obtain and to disseminate information as to places where work can be had, to help in distributing labour where it is most needed, and, above all, to devise and promote measures for the temporary and permanent utilisation of the unemployed labour of the nation."

Then it goes on with recommendations which he would deal with later on. This Conference, representing the boards of guardians and the great city councils of large centres of population, passed this resolution with absolute unanimity, and as their spokesman he suggested the creation of a Labour Department. They passed one other resolution. It was somewhat lengthy, but in view of the importance of it the House would perhaps pardon him reading it. It was as follows—

> "That seeing the President of the Local Government Board has power under existing laws to group parishes and unions to carry out such work as they individually are able to do under the powers conferred on them by Parliament, and as such power is frequently used by the Local Government Board to form

districts for dealing with the sick and children, this Conference is strongly of opinion that the Metropolitan area should be formed into one district to be called the Metropolitan District for dealing with able-bodied destitution, and that to this body all the able-bodied applicants for relief should be sent, whether such applicants are vagrants or residents of their respective parishes. This Conference further points out that as each parish has power under the Act of William IV., N2 Chap. 42 to buy 50 acres of land it would be therefore for such a body representing all London and vested with all its powers to buy a considerable quantity of land north, south, east, and west on which to put the able-bodied to work intead of as now to stone-breaking, oakum-picking and the like useless tasks. It is therefore resolved that the Right Hon. Walter Long be asked to at once issue the necessary Order to give effect to these proposals."

That was the resolution, and he hoped the President, seeing that this was purely a question of administration, and called for no legislation, would be able without delay to give effect to this scheme. If the various parishes throughout the country were empowered to group themselves together for dealing with this question their combined power would be very much greater than when separately applied.

He now came to the practical remedies. He was afraid that many of those whose sympathies would induce them to deal with this question, were held back by the fact that they believed that there must necessarily be a large and permanent unemployed element as an indispensable adjunct to the present methods of production. The larger the number of men out of work the more easily could wages be reduced, and if the time should come when every man willing to work should have within his reach the opportunity, the effective power of the worker to improve his condition would become very great indeed. Mere temporary dealing with this question was no solution for it, the amount of work to be performed must be permanently and considerably enlarged, and with all due respect to what might be the opinions of others he submitted that it could only be done by turning on to the land of England a very much larger portion of the population than now found employment thereon. The proper cultivation of the soil of Great Britain would to a very large extent solve the unemployed question. So long as trade and agriculture were allowed to flounder along without regard to the national wellbeing then he felt there could be no remedy for the state of affairs which they were now discussing. Every other country in Europe and America was devoting increasing attention and expenditure to the proper teaching and training of those who had to cultivate the soil, and here, whilst they were spending unlimited money in connection with military affairs, they were starving industry and standing idly by while agriculture was going to ruin. That state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. As he had indicated last year very considerable additional powers would be required by local authorities for the acquisition of land, for organising and training labour upon the land, and for making the life of the labourer more agreeable, as it could be made, and thereby doing what had been done in Denmark by this means. There, by this means, not only had the influx of population from the country to towns been stopped, but the flow of population had been actually reversed back again to the country. If that could be done in Denmark with such excellent effect that it improved the condition of the people and brought happiness and wealth to that nation, surely it could be done in this country. He would not dwell upon this aspect of the land question because the facts in regard to it were pretty well known.

He would seek to concentrate attention on a matter that more immediately concerned the Government, and which could be undertaken without loss of time. He referred to the question of afforestation. The total import of wood in all its various forms was something just under £20,000,000 a year. That was a serious matter. He was to this extent in the fullest sympathy with those who advocated fiscal changes, that wherever an article could be produced within our own shores it should be so produced. We should not be dependent upon outside agencies for that which could be produced with profit and advantage at home. The question of timber came well within that category. He would tell the House what was being done in Germany. He found from a report by the British Consul at Stuttgart that out of a total acreage of

135,000,000 no fewer than 35,000,000 acres were planted with woods and forests. Two-thirds of that area were owned by the State, and the planting was done by the State direct. It might be alleged that this would involve an expenditure of money. He would come to that in a moment. He wished to point out that in Germany the profits each year from these forests ranged from £15,000,000 to £18,000,000. Surely, if we could, by a judicious expenditure of capital secure a return to the State of £10,000,000, £12,000,000, or £15,000,000 a year in addition to finding our own wood and employing our own labour, that was worth making an effort to carry through. Germany was not the only country that had set an example of this kind. India was also in a like case, and the profits there from the growing of wood were from £5,000,000 to £6,000,000 a year. That had been accomplished since 1863, when systematic planting in India was first undertaken. In Saxony the net profits from what was said to be not very advantageous land for the purpose, after paying the cost of labour and interest on capital, was 38s. per acre. The value of that land for agricultural purposes was only 4s. per acre. The same kind of thing was being done all over European countries, our own colonies and many of the States of America were seriously considering the question, because there was a danger that the wood supply of the world would shortly show a shortage as against the demand. The price was bound to increase unless steps were taken to meet the demand. On 17th January last year *The Times* said—

> "In India the earlier phases of British rule were as unmindful of scientific forestry as we always have been, and still are in this country. The results were so disastrous and so menacing that in 1864 the Forest Department was established. Dr. Schlich, the Professor of Forestry at Coopers Hill and a member of the Committee whose Report we are considering, gives in the supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica a brief account of the labours of this department. 'The progress made since 1864 is,' he says, 'really astonishing.' Thousands of square miles of Indian forests are now under its control and have been preserved and managed to the great advantage of the climate, agricultural and general rural economy of India. It has been a revenue earning institution from the outset. In the first five years of its existence, from 1865 to 1870, its mean annual nett revenue was 1,372,733 rupees. In the last five years for which returns are given by Dr. Schlich, 1890 to 1895, it was 7,370,572 rupees. The percentage of increase during each quinquennial period from 1870 to 1895 has been 30 per cent., 25 per cent., 52 per cent., 50 per cent., and 45 per cent., respectively."

That had been done, by the application of scientific methods under State authority, with the forests of India. Surely the Government under whose auspices this was being done in India might well seriously consider whether something similar should not be done at home. He had mentioned already the Report of the Committee appointed by the late President of the Board of Agriculture whose loss this House deplored. He was a man of large and generous heart, wide sympathies, and intensely practical in his methods—a man who, if spared, would undoubtedly have made the Board of Agriculture an efficient means for aiding in the development of the agricultural resources of the country. Under his auspices a Committee was appointed to consider whether any measures might with advantage be taken by the provision of further educational facilities, or otherwise, for the promotion and encouragement of afforestation and the planting of wood. The Chairman of the Committee was the hon. Member for the Leith Burghs, and it included Members on both sides of the House, and authorities on arboriculture. He would read two of the recommendations of the Committee. Paragraph 7.

> "As regards the question of the extension of the forest area, it is shown on the highest authority that there is in these islands a very large area of waste, heather and rough pasture or land out of cultivation, amounting in all to 21,000,000 acres on a large proportion of which afforestation could be profitably undertaken. Regular forest book-keeping is rare in Great Britain; but we believe the various estimates of profit obtained from the cultivation of timber, which have been laid before both inquiries, to be substantially correct. These show that excellent returns, even with indifferent management, have often been obtained from plantations formed on land of little or no value for any other purpose."

Paragraph 12 said—

> "The present condition of existing woodlands has been repeatedly and clearly reviewed by many eminent authorities. It is the common verdict that timber of the kind and quality imported in such large quantities from the Baltic and similar temperate regions can be grown as well here as anywhere; in fact, it is a matter of common knowledge that European 'red wood' and 'white wood,' so highly esteemed for structural purposes, are yielded

by the Scots pine and the spruce, two of the commonest trees of British woodlands. That foreign is so generally preferred to home-grown timber is in no way due to unsuitability of soil or climate, but is entirely due to our neglect of sylvicultural principles."

He hoped the House would get some information as to what was being done to give effect to the recommendations of that Committee. He wished to know whether extra facilities for the training of foresters, and extra means for the equipping of suitable establishments for that purpose were being, or were likely to be, provided; whether the recommendation of the Committee that this matter should be undertaken by the State, and should not be left to private individuals, was likely to be acted upon; and whether the waste Crown lands which were suitable for this purpose were being utilised by the Commission of Woods and Forests as the Committee recommended they should be; and whether the Commission of Woods and Forests, or any other Department of the Government, had commenced to collect statistics as to areas presumably suitable for afforestation. If these statistics had been collected the House would then be in a position to know where the work could be commenced. That would be one step at least towards the work being undertaken.

As to the financial side of the question they would probably be told, as they were last year by the President of the Local Government Board, that those who were always preaching economy were at the same time clamouring for expenditure for the carrying out of their own fads and opinions. He clamoured urgently for the expenditure of public money for public purposes, but he did not do so in the sense of asking the State to spend money in any eleemosynary form. It was not charity that was asked from the State. They were endeavouring to get those responsible for the Departments to understand that by the proposed expenditure they were not throwing the money into a sea of blood, resulting from quarrels that never ought to have arisen, but expending it for a purpose which would benefit the State, and also be profitable from a purely commercial point of view. This was investing not spending. Let the House suppose that there was a Government in office sympathetic with this matter and determined to deal with it. Let it be assumed further that of the 21,000,000 acres of land which the Committee in their Report said was available for the purpose, and which was now lying practically idle, the Government acquired 10,000,000 acres. He was led to understand by those who knew, that such land could be acquired for 10s. an acre. A large part of that land was in Scotland and used for game-preserving purposes. There might, therefore, be a difficulty in acquiring it. But he hoped that we had reached a point when the well-being of the working people was of more importance than the sport of American millionaires. He assumed that that land was acquired at 10s. an acre, which would involve a capital expenditure of £5,000,000. The cost of planting would probably be, in this country, £3 per acre, making a further expenditure of £30,000,000, or a total outlay of £35,000,000 for acquiring and planting 10,000,000 acres with trees suitable to be grown in these islands. If that were done it would be a profitable investment. Private individuals had tried experiments on these lines. One specially referred to in various works on the subject, was that undertaken by the head forester of Lord Powerscourt. That nobleman's estate in Ireland was planted and the portion which formerly only produced 10s. an acre for agricultural purposes produced a rent of £1 under timber. But Lord Powerscourt in his testimony admitted that by plantations the value of the surrounding agricultural land had been increased by 25 per cent. The best figures attainable seemed to indicate that forests increased in value at the rate of from 10s. to £1 per acre per annum. Assuming that only 10,000,000 acres were increased in yearly value to the extent of 10s. each, in fifty years that would amount to £250,000,000. In other words, the investment of £35,000,000 would produce a return of £250,000,000. Therefore, from a commercial point of view, there was nothing to be afraid of from an experiment of this kind, while it would give permanent and profitable employment to 150,000 men. In Germany the forest employment maintained 400,000 persons.

He now came to his last point, viz., the establishment of a Ministry of Labour.

He knew that there was a difference of opinion, even amongst those who usually worked together on labour questions, as to the advisability of that measure. The chief danger that seemed to be in the minds of some of his friends was, that if a new Department were created, with a Cabinet Minister having a seat on the Treasury Bench, he would be more probably a Minister of Commerce than a Minister of Labour. He quite frankly acknowledged that if it were proposed to appoint a new Department whose duties would be divided between commerce and industry he would oppose such proposal. Already we had a Department specially charged with attending to the interests of commerce. He meant the Board of Trade. He found that Murray's "Official Handbook to Church and State" described the duties of the Board of Trade to be—

> "To take cognisance of all matters relating to trade and commerce, to advise other Departments upon such subjects, the Foreign Office in commercial matters arising out of treaties or negotiations with foreign States, the Home Office with respect to the grant and provision of charters or letters patent by the Crown, and the Treasury in matters connected with the Customs and Excise laws; also to superintend the conduct of all Bills and questions before Parliament which relate to commerce, and to exercise some control over all private Bills so far as the protection of the public interests is concerned."

The Board of Trade was therefore a Commercial Department of the Government. He proposed, in connection with the Ministry of Labour or Industry, to relieve the Board of Trade of its duties in regard to labour. He would not say one word which would, either directly or indirectly, appear to reflect upon the efficiency of those who were at present in charge of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade. They discharged their duties with consummate skill, with great conscientiousness, and with great ability. He had nothing but praise for the way in which they performed their work. But he contended that an interest so important, so wide-spread, so far-reaching, as that of labour, should not be confined to a mere corner of the Board of Trade, and should not be treated in the niggardly fashion it now was under a responsible Government. But he asked that a new Department should be called into being, or rather that the present Department should be enlarged, to be specially charged with the responsibility, not merely of collecting facts and figures, but of seeing to the proper administration of existing laws relating to labour. The new Minister should take over duties such as those of factory and mines inspection; and take a part in framing a code of Labour Laws for this country which, instead of being as it now, was infinitely behind those of foreign countries and especially of our colonies, would set an example to the world of what a labour code should be. He would not dwell on that side of the new Minister's duties, but confine himself exclusively to what should be or could be done by such a Minister for the unemployed. One section of his Department might be specially charged with the responsibility of attending to the needs of those unable to find employment. Special bureaux should be established all over the country, where a man out of work, and who wanted work, could register his name. In that, there would be a complete index as to the state of employment all over the country. The new office might also seek for and suggest schemes of reclamation, schemes of afforestation, that great public works should be undertaken, especially during periods of depression, under State auspices or authorised by the local authorities affected. They all felt that at the present time the powers given for the employment of the unemployed were inadequate, and that the machinery for carrying out any sensible proposal did not exist. The Labour Department, with these special duties, would be able to advise and assist the local authorities to combine and coordinate the various efforts made to find employment for men out of work. There were a hundred and one ways of making it easier to the local authorities to grapple with this question than they could do at the present moment.

The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, he understood, objected to the proposal that there should be a new Cabinet Minister. The right hon. Baronet thought that there should be rather a reduction in the present number. His reply to that was that the increase in the number of Government Departments was a necessity arising out of our complex and growing civilisation. The more we extended our area, and the more our influence and activities increased the greater became the demand for adequate and proper supervision. With a small country, a small Ministry would be sufficient; but where the interests of commerce, labour, and education, and the like, became so great as they had become in this country, then that economy of labour which was recognised by all industrial authorities, and which made for efficiency, namely, subdivision, should apply to Governments as well as to workshops. Each Minister should be called upon to do one thing, and be held responsible for the intelligent doing of that thing. Therefore the argument that we should not increase the number of Ministers did not apply to his proposal in the least.

As to the cost, he hoped no Member on either side of the House would mention that as an obstacle. If a thing was desirable the money could be found. He admitted that the expenditure of the country was alarmingly great, but he repeated that was because the money was spent in a wrong direction, which did not add to our greatness, which added doubtful elements to our strength, and which threw a burden on the community for no adequate result. What he and his friends pleaded for was that money should be spent in such a way as to give comfort and happiness to the oppressed and heart-weary, and give to every man the inalienable right of man—the opportunity of earning an honest living by his own labour. They asked that the resources of the State should be used to bring about that result. All down through the ages the pathetic figure of a workless man had been commented on. He was the human Christ whose crouching figure bore the accumulated sorrows of our complex civilisation; who was always being sacrificed and crucified in the interests of commercial greed. Surely in these days of abounding wealth, the time had come when some determined and systematic effort should be made to remove this reproach of strong men and women being found hungry and homeless. Scarcely a week passed that we were not horrified to read of men and women committing suicide simply because they were workless and starving. What a reproach it was! We often spoke scornfully of the dark middle ages, but in those dark middle ages there was not that horrible kind of trouble which we now experienced. There was generally a rude plenty all over the land, and the monasteries gave shelter to the poor. He feared that in days to come it might be said that the present age of wealth and great commercial prosperity was the really dark age, because men were allowed to die through the lack of employment. He would conclude with one quotation from a speech made by the late Lord Salisbury in May, 1895. In this speech at Bradford Lord Salisbury said—

> "You know the difficulty of the unemployed is rising in the south. There are vast masses of men who have no evil will, against whom no harm can be stated, who have only this one wish, this one demand—that the labour which they are prepared to give should be accepted, and bare sustenance given them in place of it, and to whom it has been necessary, from sheer want of employment to give them, to return a disappointing answer. We pass those things over. We express them in brief language. We do not take note as the information flies rapidly under our eyes. We do not take note of what misery, what despair to men, what utter despair to women and children, what physical suffering is involved in those frightful facts. I feel that as long as the problem of the unemployed presents to us the features it has shown during the last winter, we cannot say that our conscience as statesmen and politicians is discharged if we do not vote for an attempt, at all events, to solve it with the utmost time and the utmost energy in our power . . . . He did not say that he had any patent or certain remedy for the terrible evils which beset us on all sides, but he did say that it was time they left off mending the constitution of Parliament, and that they turned all the wisdom and energy Parliament could combine together in order to remedy the sufferings under which so many of their countrymen laboured."

That appeal he endorsed, and he asked the House of Commons as representing the nation, and representing, as it professed to do, the glory and greatness of the Empire, to turn its attention from the Imperial aspect of the case and to come down to the domestic aspect, and to see that every man born within the shores of these Islands should at least be provided with an opportunity of working for that living which he could not do without. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) said that after the masterly and eloquent speech of his hon. friend, who, it seemed to him, had covered the whole ground so far as the economical aspect of the question was concerned, he might be permitted, perhaps, to deal with the personal aspect of the whole business. It was frequently said that in this country of ours the people were divided into two classes—those who were willing to work and those who were willing to allow them to do so. That being so, he thought they were entitled to come face to face with the powers that be, and to ask them to provide an opportunity to work for those who were willing to do so. There were two or three classes of unemployed in this country. He would deal with but two. He would not deal with the rich unemployed; they had been animadverted upon pretty strongly during the last two or three days. But when the Minister responsible for this Department came to reply presently he would, no doubt, begin to argue that the Poor Law as it now stood was well able to cope with any exceptional distress. He would also say, no doubt, that they needed fiscal changes. It had perfectly truly been asserted that we had still to realise that the penny loaf was dear if one had not a penny with which to purchase it. Yet the proposal now before the country was to raise the price to three halfpence by putting a tax upon the commodity, in order to give the working man a better chance. The ex-Colonial Secretary indeed had gone further, and had asserted that they ought to have a responsible Minister who could survey the whole labour world and find work for the working men of the nation. The surprising thing about it was that the Government proposed to settle the unemployed difficulty in the Transvaal by introducing half a million of Chinese, in spite of the fact that, according to the information we already possessed, there were thousands upon thousands of willing workers out there who, however, could not naturally be induced to work for a mere animal existence, and who, therefore, from the Government point of view, were to be excluded from any consideration in that House or anywhere else. They would also, no doubt, be treated to the argument that men were unwilling to work, they would have pointed out to them the loafer who did little or nothing, and who was an endless expense to the whole community. It would further be said that the willing worker could always find work to do. That, however, was not true, and that it was not true was recognised by the Local Government Board, which, from time to time, issued Orders to the boards of guardians to find "useful" work for able-bodied paupers. What character of work was thus provided? These able-bodied paupers were housed and fed better than the liberty loving workman, and in return they were called upon to pick a fixed quantity of oakum. Was that a lucrative investment of labour? No, the truth was that not infrequently people were paid to bring the oakum to the workhouse, and after the paupers had picked a ton the material was returned free of charge to the firm which had sent it in, and the cost to the ratepayers for that amount of work thus done was not covered by a less sum than £10. Surely that could not be called "encouraging" useful labour.

They had vainly tried to induce the Local Government Board to help them to deal with that class of men, whom he preferred for the moment to call the flotsam and jetsam of the labour world. They had also asked the Board to assist honest attempts to provide useful employment for honest workmen, but they were always met with stories such as one of which he happened to be the originator. They were told of a man who applied to a foreman of some works for employment, and who, on being informed that there was difficulty in finding work for those already engaged by the firm, replied that what he would do would not make much difference. Of course, originally the application was made by a man who was applying for piece and not day work, but still the story was told as applying to day employment in order to impart the sting to it. Then, again, there was the man they were so frequently reminded of who, when he woke up in the morning, asked his wife if it was raining, and who on receiving a reply in the negative put the further inquiry, "Does it look like rain"? To that the answer was "No," and he promptly rejoined, "Then I wish it was Sunday." This was the class of men who made it so difficult for them to deal with the unemployed problem. He had long been agitating to get established some organised system of dealing with the unemployed, and occupying the position he did in connection with one of the big unions he had often been blamed by these loafers because he had declared that he desired to provide work for the worker, and not to provide assistance for the loafer. Whenever any suggestion was made to the Local Government Board as to a solution of this problem, a series of inquiries were addressed to them, and they were finally asked whether it would pay. Again, if an enterprising board of guardians made any practical suggestion for dealing with able-bodied paupers, they simply got the reply that the Department were seriously considering the question. That was the invariable reply, and he thought that if he were the head of the Department he would have that answer printed instead of taking the trouble to write it time after time.

A man in the house would, if the guardians broke the law, at once say he would report them to the Local Government Board. This sort of man took his discharge when a ship came into port, and went and fought his better brother who was trying to keep a house over the head of his wife and children, and being neat and clean he was usually given the preference over his better brother; he got his day's wages which he spent in drink, and then at night came back to the house and said he was a destitute person, and then if the guardians refused him admittance he said he would report them to the Local Government Board. His board of guardians had refused them, and had sent them down to Hadleigh Farm, where the Salvation Army was doing such excellent work, to do field work, but when they got there they used to say they did not think they liked the look of that and went away, and with the outfit with which the guardians had presented them they paid their way back to town. One man who did this they took before the magistrate, and charged him with neglecting to maintain himself, he then said he was willing to work, he was only too anxious to work, but they had no work to give him. He assured the House that if the able-bodied man went into the workhouse, every hour he remained there he became more degraded and demoralised. Under the present workhouse system, with its habitual casuals, it was difficult to compel wasters and tramps to work; but if the Local Government Board would unite districts and enable guardians to take land, and put their flotsam and jetsam on to the land, and give them power to keep them there, something might be done to make useful labourers of them. [A Voice: Chinese labour.] He knew that meant an alteration of the law, but the House had already assented to the proposal to keep Chinamen in a compound. He would appeal in this matter to the Empire builder. It was estimated that there were 30,000 tramps on the road, and 61,000 able-bodied paupers in England and Wales. Surely if 30,000 of these men could be trained to a useful knowledge of agricultural work, they would be a useful class of man to send to Canada. He was strongly of opinion that if the guardians could compel able-bodied men to work on the land they would get rid of the tramp element very quickly, because if it was known that there were colonies where these men could get useful employment the promiscuous charity by which they were more or less maintained would be stopped. Everything that was done now played into the hands of the habituals, and not into the hands of the unemployed who were genuinely anxious for work. With the creation of a Department and Minister for Industry much could be done, as much ought to be done, to assist the deserving. Most people engaged in industry could tell within two or three years what was going to happen, and such a Department would be able to foresee events, at all events, to a certain extent, and to make some provision to meet distress.

As to thrift, it was all very well to save on £18 a week, but it was a very different matter when the wage was only 18s. They could not make such a show upon that as one could desire. There was a phrase in that part of the town in which he was connected that summed up the situation exactly. That phrase was, "We are in and out regular." In his experience there always had been a lot of casual labour, and so far as he could see there always must be; it was the old, old story that in that neighbourhood they knew only too well "Monday plenty, Tuesday some, Wednesday little, Thursday none, never mind Friday, we shall draw our money on Saturday." That was the average life of the British workman. The accumulation of wealth in the country did not pan out to the advantage of the working man. In times of industrial depression, the man who went without was the working man, and his wife and children. He had nothing but the Poor Law to fall back upon; and the moment he touched that it demoralised and degraded him. There was a general impression that when work fell off the first man to be discharged was the old man. That was not his experience. He lived among his own people, and in times of depression the first man to approach him was the comparatively young man. He was discharged because he had lost time and had not paid attention to his work. The next man to be discharged was the old man, but he had been diligent at his work, and his master endeavoured to keep him on as long as he could. When the old man came along things were awfully bad. The old man called in October or November when trade was falling off; and then had before him a hard winter with absolutely nothing except what he got from his trades union. Notwithstanding all the attacks on them, trades unions did something to help men in distress. Indeed, 61 per cent. of the expenditure of trades unions went in benefit to the sick and unemployed. At the commencement of the winter the old unemployed man was a simple, kindly, obliging person who said he would be satisfied if he could only get three days work a week. He would say he was about to move from three rooms into two. At election times that man was told he was the backbone of the British Empire, and that his forefathers fought and bled to make this country. That man made a heroic struggle to keep his little home over his head. One thing went, then another, not for the father or the mother, but for the children. He himself heard a mother say, "It is no use telling young children that father is out of work. They don't know anything about it, and we have no right to inflict the burden on their little minds." Watch the man who was kindly pleading for work in October through the winter. In February he was demoralised and degraded and a bully. He would say he was an Englishman, and if something could not be done for him, it was time there should. On writing to the President of the Board of Trade, he himself would be told that the matter of employment was still under the consideration of the Department. A right hon. Gentleman said, and he agreed with him, that labour was not a section or a class. It was the whole nation; and the nation had to depend on it. The well-being of the whole nation was dependent on the Government. In his childhood and early manhood he believed that Parliament existed for the express purpose of protecting the weak and the helpless, and seeing that no one went without the common necessaries of life, and that the country was made a little brighter and better. Later experience however, convinced him that Parliament looked after the people who were well able to look after themselves. The well-being of the people should be the first consideration of the Government.

What could a Minister of Industry such as his hon. friend suggested, do in a time of industrial depression. Indeed, such a Minister should not wait for a time of depression, for after all, statesmanship claimed to foresee many things which, however, were not always foreseen. When a man in private employment broke down, his employer might say he could not help it, and that he had the Poor Law to fall back upon; but with Parliament it was different. A Minister of Industry could send to any governing body in the country when there was a dearth of employment and ascertain what work could be undertaken (1) for the locality if a loan on reasonable terms were advanced; (2) at the expense of the county rate; and (3) at the expense of the National Exchequer. Throughout Great Britain there was considerable work remaining undone, which, if done, would provide employment and be a benefit to the whole community. Look at the rivers. Many of them were silted up because some person or other could not afford the expense. If they were cleared and embanked their value would be increased, and the work would give employment. Then there was the reclamation of slab and waste lands and the encroachment of the sea on various parts of the coast might be prevented. These works could be taken up in times of industrial depression, as they could be dropped when the position improved. Assume that there were 10,000 men idle on the Tyne. The Minister of Industry would send down an inspector to inquire into the work that was proposed and on his report the Minister would decide whether it should be undertaken at the expense of the locality or of the National Exchequer. It would be the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to earmark a certain sum of money, in such years, for dealing with the unemployed during times of depression. Surely it would be better to give a man honest work than charity, which was always demoralising and degrading. He himself did not know how it felt to have a lot of money. He did not back horses; but if a man backed the right horse he would imagine he would say "Easy come, easy go." The same thing applied to charity. When a man got so low down, degraded by want of employment, he lost his manhood, he did not care what became of him, and simply swilled beer whenever he could get it. He believed the House was not only sympathetic but desired to be practical. It wasted an awful lot of money every year in experiments, but here was an experiment really worth making. By the creation of a Department that should organise work throughout the length and breadth of the land and keep docketed in its proper place, for use in emergency, information which could be availed of in periods of commercial depression, the blood and sinew of the people could be kept up, instead of things being allowed to go until the people were so degraded that they were unable to do work when offered it. Something should be done for those who could not help themselves. He asked the Government to accept the Amendment. It was not a vote of censure; it simply called the attention of the Government to a slip of the memory in drawing up the King's Speech. That was nothing to be ashamed of; the best of men sometimes did the same thing, and he hoped now that they had been reminded of it they would have the moral courage to stand up and accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And further we desire humbly to express our regret that, in view of the distress arising from lack of employment, Your Majesty's advisers have not seen fit to recommend the creation of a Department and Minister of Labour fully empowered, *inter alia*, to deal effectively, acting in conjunction with local administrative authorities, with such lack of employment, mainly by the execution of necessary public works, afforestation, and further by encouraging an increase in the numbers of those employed in agricultural pursuits.'"—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

Question proposed: "That those words be there added."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he wished it had been possible to treat this as a non-Party question, but that was absolutely impossible because no Amendment to the King's Speech could be accepted by the Government. The precedent quoted of a few years ago was not one they would be inclined to follow now. One would have thought that upon a question involving so much misery and suffering it would have been possible to treat it from a non-political point of view, but a long acquaintance with the House of Commons convinced him that it was impossible that such a question as that brought forward by the mover of this Amendment could be treated on non-Party lines. They had listened with the greatest interest and sympathy to the speeches made by the hon. Members for Merthyr Tydvil and Woolwich, which were moderate in their character, and obtained the respectful sympathy of both sides of the House. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil with quiet dignity, and the hon. Member for Woolwich with a good deal of that humour which characterised him, showed that they were dealing with one of the most painful subjects, namely, the misery and suffering of what had been described as "the submerged tenth." Those speeches had produced the greatest possible effect upon this House, and sympathy from the Ministerial Benches was just as great as upon the other side of the House. They had been told of the hard case of the man who wanted work, and was willing to work but could not find employment, and that the cause of honest labour was prejudiced by the existence of an undeserving class. Unfortunately the latter must always be a disability under which labour suffered, but as long as such men as the hon. Members for Battersea, Merthyr Tydvil, and Woolwich were prepared to tell working men that they did not plead for the idle scoundrel and the drunkard, he was sure there would always be sympathy for the deserving class. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil did not dwell upon the faults of the Poor Law, but the hon. Member for Woolwich did. Anyone acquainted with the outline of the Poor Law must be aware of its inability to cope with all the distress and misery that arose from time to time. Both sides of the House, when in power, did their best and adopted any fresh laws and rules for the better conduct of Government Departments that were possible and seemed to them to be wise. It was very easy to chaff a Government Department by quoting the familiar reply that "the matter was receiving the serious consideration of the board." That might lend itself to laughter, but it was often very true and the Local Government Board were frequently trying to solve problems which every day got more pressing. Every man who was worthy of being a Member of Parliament must agree with the view that charity degraded a man and the workhouse was the worst possible abode for any man who was willing to work. On that point he thought both sides of the house were absolutely agreed. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil said there were 12,000,000 of unemployed in this country.

*Mr. KEIR HARDIE: What I said was that there were 12,000,000 in poverty and on the verge of poverty, whilst 5 per cent. of the total number of workers were out of work.

Colonel LOCKWOOD said perhaps he might be allowed to refer to some other remedy, and no doubt the hon. Member opposite would prefer even the condition of things he had described, to life under the old system of protection. Even those like himself who viewed with favour the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham never dreamt in their wildest moments that it was possible that they would ever revert to those days which he agreed were painful and terrible to the people of this country. Such a thing would never be tolerated and the working classes of this country were never likely to be reduced to the pain and suffering which they went through in the old days. The hon. Member opposite had suggested municipal workshops as a remedy. He was afraid that after the trial of that remedy in France they would not be tempted to adopt anything of the sort in this country. Sometimes he had had occasion to feel that he could not accept all the doctrines of trades unions either as useful to trade or as making the way of the workmen or the masters smoother. But they all recognised the fact that trades unions had played a most important part in this country, and were more likely to play a greater part in the future. Without trenching upon what must naturally be delicate ground he had always understood from the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the trade of England at the present time was in the most flourishing condition, that there was no need for any attempt at fiscal reform, and that matters if left to themselves would remedy themselves. They had heard from the Labour Members facts about the want of employment and distress amongst the working classes, and he hoped he should have the pleasure of hearing what the hon. Member for Battersea had to say upon this question. They must eliminate the waifs and strays and the jetsam and flotsam from the class of men they were talking of. He should like to hear from hon. Gentlemen opposite whether they recognised the fact that there were many thousands of men at the present time out of employment, and, if so, they were only echoing in a still more marked manner than the Member for West Birmingham the contention that all was not well with our trade at the present time. They never pretended that the trade of England was ruined, but it was not as prosperous as it should be. Hon. Members opposite said that the ex-Colonial Secretary's proposals were not likely to benefit the workmen, but at all events the right hon. Gentleman had put forward a concrete proposal which he had had the courage to lay before the country, whilst on the other hand very few remedies had been put forward by those who opposed the Member for West Birmingham's scheme. The hon. Gentleman opposite had proposed the creation of something like penal Chinese colonies, but he did not believe the House was likely to accept such a remedy.

With regard to the agricultural labourer he might say that farmers had been visited with the most disastrous winter and spring that most of them could remember. Consequently, they had to add that to the disadvantages under which they were labouring at the present time. He thought they ought also to have some regard for those men who toiled with very little reward in the country, and whose future was often the most miserable that it was possible to conceive. The agricultural labourer dragged out a miserable existence upon insufficient wages and amid unhealthy surroundings, and he was worthy of the sympathy of the House. At the present time there was very little hope for the agricultural labourer. The resources of the farmer were exhausted by misfortune, and the population from which they used to draw the best men for the Army and Navy were in a deplorable condition. Were they going to leave the agricultural labourer with his scanty wages and miserable home without attempting, at all events, to do something for him. So long as they left the agricultural labourer to flounder along there was but little hope for them. With regard to the question of afforestation he agreed that there was a quantity of wood used in this country imported from abroad which might be grown with advantage, if with profit, in this country. He did not, however, think they could compare the great tracts of land in Germany and France, where there were huge areas covered with pine, with the lands in England. He did not believe for one moment that the land in England could be profitably employed for the purposes of afforestation. For instance, they could hardly take the moorland of Scotland as likely to afford remuneration to the man who afforested such land. They should also remember that the amount of labour employed per acre on afforested land was very much less than on land under corn or crops of any description. It should not be forgotten that the Government had always been searching for land upon which to conduct Army manœuvres, and a certain amount of open space was absolutely necessary for this purpose. The hon. Member for Woolwich said that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would probably tell them that this evil arose through want of thrift amongst the working classes. If there was more employment and more constant work thrift would be increased because the wretched man would have something to put away. The hon. Member for Woolwich also said that the President of the Board of Trade would probably tell them that 30s. a week was a princely income, but he did not believe that anyone would advance that theory for a man who had to keep a wife and five children. He agreed that the tasks set in workhouses were not a remedy which ought to be applied to the unemployed. He wanted to see in England employment for every man, and a state of things under which no man would have to look about for work which he was ready to do. Those who had spoken upon this subject had proved to them absolutely that there was depression. He echoed that sentiment and believed in it, and it was because hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House believed that trade was not flourishing that they had ventured on a course which they thought was absolutely necessary to remedy this state of things.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he did not think that there was any need to mix up the question of fiscal reform with this question. Nobody, not even the most hide-bound Cobdenite, would argue that in the matter of trade all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds; but he and those who thought with him did argue that the proposals of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham were likely to do harm rather than good, and to lead to a diminution rather than an increase in the amount of employment. If it could be proved that those proposals would lead to increased trade and employment, hon. Members on the Opposition side would be the very first to adopt them. They had listened with great interest to the very moderate speech of the mover of this Amendment, and they had also listened with especial interest to the racy speech of the hon. Member for Woolwich. This was not in any sense a Party question. He thought neither Party had up to now faced the facts and attempted to deal with them in a broad and generous spirit. They all admitted that the matter was one of urgency and importance. It was of urgency, because each recurring winter there was great distress among the unemployed in the different parts of the country. Fortunately there had been an open winter this year, or, at all events in London, there would have been a very great deal of distress. There was one point to which the House ought to pay some attention. His hon. friend had called attention to the fact that the great trades unions of the country had in the last ten years spent upwards of £3,000,000 in relief to the unemployed, thus enabling them to keep their homes together while they were out of employment. He could not go into that question now, but the whole of the trades unions were absolutely threatened, and unless this House came to the conclusion that in view of recent legal decisions, legal protection should be given to trades unions, he was afraid that the sums which had hitherto gone for the relief of the unemployed, would go into the pockets of the employers in the case of industrial disputes and strikes. This was a serious matter, for, after all, it was the trades unions which had helped to keep down the number of the unemployed.

The practical proposals of the Amendment were threefold. In the first place, the hon. Member desired the creation of a special Department which would deal with labour problems; in the second place, he desired to give the State power to deal with such questions as afforestation; and, in the third place, he desired to give greater power of combination to local authorities to deal with questions affecting the unemployed especially, and to give them power for the acquisition of land in order to enable them to find employment as necessary. He agreed that if this question was to be dealt with at all effectively, it must be dealt with to a certain extent under the control of a central Department working through the local authorities. He could not see what objection there could be on the part of the Government to giving greater powers of combination and grouping to the different local authorities, in order to enable them to deal more effectively with this question than they were able to do at present as individual bodies. It was not possible to have this matter properly dealt with by isolated local authorities. If one local authority dealt with it, and a neighbouring authority neglected it, the only result was that there was a greater rush of workers into that particular district, to the disadvantage of those who were attempting to deal with it on a proper basis. This was more especially the case in regard to London. He should like that the President of the Local Government Board had power to combine the different borough councils and others into one body for such purposes. He very much doubted whether under existing Statutes he had that power. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to have the power conferred on him of dealing with the question in London, and of giving to the local authorities the power of combining and organising for this and other purposes. The argument in favour of treating London as a whole in this matter was a very sound one, for it was already recognised as a whole under the Equalisation of Rates Act. He thought there was very considerable feeling in favour of extending that system still further. Thanks to the ordinary circumstances affecting a great community, some parts of London had become and were becoming ever richer and less populous and others poorer and more populous and unless London was dealt with as a whole there was danger of an unjust weight falling on the poorer parts to the relief of the richer. His hon. friend desired that these grouped bodies should have power to acquire land in order that work, and especially test work, might be carried on under the authority of municipal labour departments for the benefit of the unemployed during periods of special depression when they were not able to obtain other work.

Mr Sydney Buxton.

The hon. and gallant Member for the Epping Division said that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment advocated municipal workshops.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said that what he stated was that the hon. Member who moved the Amendment advocated the giving of power to local districts to give municipal work.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he heard the hon. Member read extracts in regard to municipal workshops in other countries, but he did not understand him this afternoon to advocate municipal workshops here, though he might have done so on other occasions. What the hon. Member advocated was the taking of people out of the towns and putting them on the land in different parts of the country. That was a very different matter altogether. He was aware that municipal workshops had been tried and that they had certainly failed, very largely because they had not been carried on under proper inspection and because the result of their having been opened in certain places had been to attract labourers from other parts in order to go into these municipal workshops. Harm had been done in that way by attracting labour away from where, in the ordinary way, it might have been employed to places where it was artificially in demand. The work proposed by his hon. friend in connection with the grouping of local authorities would not only provide for the unemployed but might be made reproductive. With regard to afforestation he must congratulate his hon. friend the Member for the Leith Burghs, who was chairman of the Commission on that subject, on the fact that he had shown in his own person that afforestation could be carried out on business lines and made profitable. There was, at all events, no objection in principle to very considerable steps being taken on the lines indicated by the mover of the Amendment. Several recommendations had been made by the Commission, and if they could be carried out they would certainly lead to a considerable amount of employment and to the supply of this country with raw material for our own manufactures. Only a day or two ago a Question was asked in regard to Government subsidies for the growing of cotton in different parts of the Colonies. He was glad to hear both sides of the House cheer the proposition. With regard to the fiscal question, free-traders quite as much as retaliators were in favour of growing raw material as far as possible within the Empire. If what his hon. friend the mover of the Amendment proposed could be done on a proper and sensible basis he would endorse the proposal. That was a particular and practical matter with which a Government department could deal.

With regard to the proposal for the creation of a Department of Labour he would like to say that he did not agree with his hon. friend in the view that there was room for a single department to deal solely with labour questions. He had some sympathy with the Amendment and desired to vote for it, but he wished to guard himself against being committed to the actual proposal that there should be a separate and distinct Department of Labour. He thought, however, that there was great room for a rearrangement of the offices of the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board and the creation of new departments in their stead. He was one of those who were strongly in favour of the creation of a Commercial Department. But besides this he would like to see the creation of a department, one of whose principal functions would be to deal with labour questions. His hon. friend the Member for Woolwich had referred to the duties of such a department when created. He thought everybody would admit that it would be an advantage if the labour portion of the Board of Trade was transferred to the Local Government Board and if that department were made more powerful than it was at present. No one had any desire to throw any reflection on the work of that department in the past. So far as it had opportunity it had done most admirable work. But if such a department as he had suggested were created it might have considerable effect in dealing not only with the unemployed question in towns but also with the position of the agricultural labourers, with whom they all sympathised. Though he did not suppose that the proposals in the Amendment would be an absolute remedy for the lack of employment, he held that they would be a real palliative for evils which they all admitted to exist.

*Mr. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford) said everyone would sympathise with the object of the Amendment, and although it had been explained that it was not intended as a vote of no confidence in the Government, there was no doubt that if a division took place and if the Amendment were carried it would be regarded as a vote of censure on the Government. He thought we already had enough Government departments, and the only question was how they should be adequately administered and brought up to date. The seconder of the Amendment had said that the officers of the departments should be adequately paid. The hon. Member would find that the officers of the Board of Trade consisted of a Comptroller-General with a salary of £1,200 a year, an assistant labour commissioner, and about twenty other gentlemen whose salaries ranged from £700 to £1,200. He did not think that anyone would say that this particular department was up to date, or that it formed a bureau wherein everyone who was seeking employment might obtain information where that employment could be found. He would point out that the real remedy was to appoint a Minister of Commerce and Industry. At the present time there was a Committee sitting and considering the various forms of work that might be undertaken by such a department with a Minister at its head.

*Mr SPEAKER: The Amendment is only about a Minister of Labour The hon. Member is now discussing the Board of Trade and a Commercial Department.

*Mr. LOUIS SINCLAIR: I am now discussing the commercial intelligence branch of the Board of Trade.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has a notice of an Amendment on that point. If that is reached he will have an opportunity of discussing it, but he cannot discuss it now.

*Mr. LOUIS SINCLAIR said he had very little hope of that Amendment being reached. He would confine himself to the remarks made by the mover and seconder of the Amendment before the House. He reminded the House that a proposal for the appointment of a Minister of Labour was made in 1893. He would point out to the hon. Member who moved the present Amendment that it would be a very difficult thing indeed to have a separate Minister to deal with the Factories and Workshops Acts, the housing of the working classes, and probably old-age pensions, and various other matters which pertained to industry apart from the Commercial Department of the Board of Trade. He thought there must be a sub-division of that important work. They had heard that commerce, trade and industry went hand in hand, and that one could not exist without the others. It was imperative, therefore, to recognise that the question was essentially a complex one. It was admitted on the other side of the House that the trade and prosperity of this country were not so great as they might be. He had heard also that the number of unemployed was on the increase, and that there were 12,000,000 either in want or on the verge of starvation. Would a Minister of Labour be able to deal with this matter without being in absolute touch with the matters which were now dealt with by the Board of Trade? Surely the Board of Trade required a head who would deal exclusively with statistical information with regard to labour? In the north of England it was noted last year that in some towns there were numbers of unemployed, while only a few miles away factories were working half time owing to the owners not being able to get men for them. With regard to the agricultural classes, hon. Members were aware that it sometimes happened that crops were allowed to lie on the ground because farmers were not able to get sufficient labour. People did not care to take labour which was inadequately paid. The House was moved by the appeal of the hon. Member for Woolwich as to the wastefulness of this. It was, he thought, in great measure due to the fact that trades unions made such hard and fast rules with regard to labour that many people in winter were not more employed. They all recognised the admirable work done by trades unions, but he thought it was unfortunate that they did not permit men, however good they might be, to accept a higher wage than other men who were less competent. If one man did double the work of another he did not receive double the wage the other man received. He would suggest to his hon. friend that if he could amend the rules so that the good workman would receive a little more than the bad workman he would do something to improve the conditions of labour.

MR. CROOKS: That is so now. It is only the minimum wage that is fixed, not the maximum.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR said the minimum was very often the maximum. He did not know the exact amount paid to a carpenter, but he would suppose that it was 11d. per hour, and that the ordinary wage paid to a labourer was 7d. per hour. He considered that the difference was enormous, and if 11d. was the wage necessary to keep a family, 7d. was not. His point was that there were carpenters and carpenters. In taking a building contract an employer struck an average, and paid not more that 11d. per hour, though he might very often find among the men one who was worth 1s. 3d. or 1s. 4d. per hour. But if he paid that man 1s. 3d. or 1s. 4d. per hour he would find that he would have the greatest difficulty with the trades unions.

MR. CROOKS: That is not so.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR said he would give an example. He had a man in his employment to whom he paid 1s. 3d. per hour, because he considered he was worth it, but this gave great dissatisfaction to the others and they left. When work was resumed he had to pay these men the same wage all round.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): I could give you evidence of quite the reverse.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR said it was not that they had not got every sympathy with the lot of those who could not obtain employment, but he did not think the hon. Member would attain the object he had in view by moving an Amendment which was practically a vote of censure on the Government. They knew the admirable work done on the Continent for trade and commerce, especially in France, where, likewise, a Government department dealt with the differences that might occur between employers and employed. He certainly thought that the question should be thrashed out as to whether the Board of Trade was an efficient department and up to the times. He himself thought that it was not an efficient department, and that as at present constituted it was impossible for it to deal adequately with all questions relating to commerce, industry, and labour. It ought to have various subdepartments, and if his friends, who had this question deeply at heart, would force on the Government an inquiry as to the various functions of the Board of Trade, they would do more good probably than by the vote of censure.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he should certainly hesitate to support a proposal to create a new department, but he would strongly support a representation to the Government showing that certain departments had not done what they might have done for labour At any rate, there was one industry, that of afforestation, which must be directly promoted by the State, if labour was to obtain its full advantage from it. This was a subject in which he had long taken a practical interest. He had served on two inquiries in connection with it. What were the facts? We imported timber and timber products of the value of nearly £30,000,000 a year. Our home production of timber was small; he thought it amounted to only 2,000,000 tons a year, and the value was not large, because there had been no instructions in the art of growing timber in this country. They could not increase timber growing by protective tariffs, because tariffs did not teach the people how to grow timber. As a matter of fact timber preferences were the last to be taken off. There was a considerable protective duty on timber till 1860, but the heavy duties on the timber taught us nothing, and left no mark behind on our woodlands, which were the despair of anyone interested in them. He excepted a few parts of England which were under coppice. There were portions of beech coppice in

Buckinghamshire which showed a profit of £2 an acre. He also knew one or two patches in Scotland where timber was properly grown. The area available for timber growing was enormous. In his own country there were between 19,000,000 and 20,000,000 acres, only one fourth of which was under agricultural occupation; the rest was rough pasture and heather. In England the rough pasture and heather amounted to 5,000,000 acres. He always regretted that under the Land Purchase Act of last year nothing had been done for State afforestation. He was sure that timber could not be properly grown in this country unless the State took direct action. It must provide facilities for teaching, and hold woodlands of its own, properly managed. Private owners were not disposed to lay out money in the afforestation of waste land, because the capital had to lie too long before it came again. Moreover, it was impossible to get good timber without continuous good management. There was no example in this country of a succession of private owners who had managed their woodlands successfully, and therefore there was an opening for State action.

In Germany, 1,000,000 of the population were dependent on the production of timber, and 3,000,000 were dependent on the manufacture of timber and timber products. In the Southern German States there were 1,000,000 acres returning a net income of £1,000,000, which showed the result of State action, and good management. It had been shown quite clearly that owing to the exhaustion of the best American forests, and the excellent way in which timber could be grown here, that it would be an act of common prudence to make provision for a large extension of our woodlands. If a remedy was to be found for the present state of things in this country, it could not be provided by the existing departments. A Forestry Department should be created with power to buy land, and plant it. He believed there were 10,000,000 acres in this country which could be put under timber to produce £1 per acre. We imported a great deal of wood-pulp, and £18,000,000 worth of coniferous trees, which he believed could be perfectly well produced at home. He was perfectly confident that if suitable areas were afforested we might have a population of 750,000 dependent on those employed in the woodlands, and the raw material thus provided would feed great industries, which would support an even larger population. There had been a great diminution of late years in the rural population in this country, and the same process had been going on in France and Germany. He knew of no other means of restoring the people to the soil except through afforestation under a State department.

MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said he hoped they would not go to a division on this subject. Many of them who sympathised with the subject under discussion would not vote for what was practically a vote of censure on the Government. He wished to say a word or two in connection with the mistaken arguments which had been used on certain details and statistics quoted during the debate. These statistics were misleading, unless accompanied by explanation. In Germany, France and the United States there were no workhouses; in Great Britain there were workhouses, as they knew to their cost. If the unemployed in the workhouses (he did not include the unemployable) were added to the statistics it would immensely increase the number of unemployed in this country. It was a matter of common knowledge that the statistics of the unemployed in Germany, France, and America were not to be depended upon. Those who were engaged in businesses like his own got more than a glimpse of what took place behind the scenes. Steamers were cosmopolitan; they traded not only with England, but with all other countries in the world. His own business was done principally with Argentina and the other South American Republics. The carrying lines to these countries, British as well as foreign, worked under an agreement in regard to rates, which were so arranged that no country had any advantage over the other; but the foreigner was protected in his home market, and was beating us, in his opinion, out of the field. He had only recently returned from a business visit to Brazil and Argentina, and he had seen a notable change there during the last two years. The manufacturing business, which used to give employment to our own people, was now done for themselves by these countries.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Gentleman is not in order in discussing the fiscal question. The subject of discussion is not the causes of the want of employment but whether a Minister of Labour and a Department of Labour should be appointed.

MR. DAVID MACIVER said that he did not wish to be out of order; he only wanted to show that the facts which came under his own personal knowledge afforded grounds for his contention that the Board of Trade should be so strengthened as to enable it to include an adequate Department of Labour rather than that a separate Ministry of Labour should be set up.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said there was no one on that side of the House who did not recognise the importance of the subject under discussion, or who did not sympathise with everything that had been said by the hon. Member for Woolwich. But as the Amendment to the Address was, by the Rules of the House, a vote of want of confidence in the Government, no one on that side of the House could vote for it, even if they supposed that the Amendment moved from the other side of the House would achieve the result they desired to bring about. He had heard the greater part of the speech of the hon. Member for Woolwich and he congratulated him on the extremely able and moderate manner in which he had put his case before the House. The views laid down by the hon. Member emphasised the position always held on that side of the House, viz., that the real aim and object of everyone who had the welfare of the working classes and of the whole community at heart was to endeavour to find permanent employment for the people. He was surprised that the hon. Member for Woolwich should have proposed that there should be compulsory detention on the land.

MR. CROOKS: Only for the habitual able-bodied pauper.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said he perfectly understood that the hon. Gentleman only wanted to put men who would not work on to the land and compel them to work. The question for consideration was whether the appointment of a Minister of Labour would bring about that abundance of employment which was a real need. Such a Minister could do nothing unless he used public money in creating artificial employment; whereas what we wanted was genuine remunerative employment in a natural way. It would not be in order for him to go into the question of fiscal reform, but he would like to say that in his opinion the speech of the hon. Member for Woolwich was the strongest he had yet heard delivered in favour of the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. Many on that side of the House were prepared with a remedy for want of employment in a natural way, while gentlemen on the other side were not prepared with or desirous to find a remedy. As to the question of afforestation the hon. Member for Leith said that one reason why private enterprise had failed in this direction was that for a long time it must be a dead loss. He would point out that if it was a dead loss to the individual it must also be a dead loss to the State, and he did not think the present was a good time for locking up money. If the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman were carried out the capital involved would remain unremunerative.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said it would only mean waiting for a dividend.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said that the State was not in a different position from the individual; and during the period that the capital remained unremunerative, the interest would have to be paid, and there would be no return. He did not think that at present it was opportune to allocate sums of money which could not be profitably used. Trade was bad, and there was no money in the country. That was one of the reasons why he and his hon. friend were endeavouring to make trade better. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who wished to take money from one pocket and put it into another were really doing a great deal to destroy that confidence in capital which was desired. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Woolwich referred to the reclamation of waste lands. He knew something about that question. He knew a man who had spent about £100,000 in reclaiming 4,000 acres, and the result was he practically ruined himself, because when the bad times came, and when wheat went down, it was impossible to use the land properly, and he had no return for his capital. If the scheme of the hon. Member for Woolwich were adopted, with the price of wheat what it was, the only result would be that the money would be lost. He only intervened because he wished to show that his hon. friends and himself were just as anxious to help the working man as the hon. Gentlemen opposite.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER said it was a great pleasure to him to find from what had been said on both sides of the House that there was a very large amount of human feeling and keen sympathy with the objects of the Amendment. If they differed at all, they differed only as to method. He remembered reading in the Report of the Poor Law Commission of 1844 about parish farms. It was a most deplorable story. His colleagues on Boards of Guardians in Cheshire had, from time to time, a hankering to return to the old system, but he himself had always said it would be an extremely dangerous policy to undertake. Men who worked on parish farms did as little as they possibly could, and the result was almost invariably that the contagion spread through the parish, and the surrounding parishes, and that other labourers adopted the same as the labourers on the parish farm. He did not think that Boards of Guardians were the best class of employers, and on that point he differed from his hon. friend who moved the Amendment. He was greatly interested in the remarks of the hon. Member for Leith Burghs. The late Dr. Hunter was possessed of an intellect which was equally accurate and luminous. He satisfied himself by a study of the question that if he could only obtain a fair allocation of Scotland's share of the National Debt, he would be able to pay it off in two generations out of the profits resulting from the reafforestation of the Highlands, in spite of the fact that he would have to pay interest while waiting for a profit. He was amazed that a business-man like the hon. Baronet who had just spoken should think that an investment which was spread over twenty years, and which did not pay a dividend, was lost. He was aware that the hon. Baronet turned over his money daily, and made a profit. Others, however, were accustomed to lay out money for years in the sure and certain hope of ultimately obtaining a dividend; and they had no reason to grumble. He sympathised very greatly with the suggestion that the superabundance of the population should be transferred from the towns to the rural districts. He believed that the country would very greatly benefit from such a transfer. He very frequently travelled between Liverpool and London, and certainly the land along that route did not look overcrowded. There was plenty of room. He intended to vote for the Amendment, because by doing so he would be doing his best to bring about an improved sense of proportion with regard to public affairs. If hon. Gentlemen could only realise the importance of devoting the best of their thoughts to the consideration of the condition of their own people, they would be acting wisely and well. He was not sure that the method proposed in the Amendment would be the best to achieve its purpose. He wished, instead of creating a new department, that all departments of the Government would be impressed with a due sense of the value of the ideas of his hon. friend who moved the Amendment, and that they should all realise that it was of the very greatest importance that they should help the poor people of this country to help themselves, first by education and then by improving their physical condition. Many hon Gentlemen opposite, and also many of his hon. friends, were sportsmen, and knew the saying, "The more trees the more salmon." The fact that salmon were diminishing in Scotland was the result of cutting down the trees; and if the Highlands were reafforested it would not only give labour to the people, but would also provide more sport. It was always the case if a step were taken in the right direction, an extra benefit, which was not calculated upon, would follow. Although what he had said might, to some extent, be inconsistent with the actual words of the Amendment which the hon. Gentleman moved in an extremely moderate speech, and a kindly sense of human feeling, he would vote for it.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said he did not intend to follow the hon. Gentleman opposite into the realms of fiscal tariff, or what happened in South America, but he wished to make a few remarks on one aspect of the question which he had ventured to raise on several occasions in the House in past years. That was the question of reafforestation. He had the honour of serving on a Departmental Committee on the subject; and he was sure they all deplored the loss of the Minister who appointed that Committee. He was one of the most business-like Ministers who had ever sat in the House of Commons, and if he had lived he would have done much to promote the object he had at heart when he appointed that Committee. The question of reafforestation was one in which Wales was deeply interested. One witness before the Committee gave it as his opinion that Wales, in proportion to area, had more land available for profitable planting than any other portion of the United Kingdom. In past times Wales was covered with great forests, which were a source of profit and employment, and which furnished timber for building many of the most famous ships of the Navy 100 years ago. The quality of the timber was considered far better than that produced in any other part of the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, that state of affairs had ceased to exist. For years past they had been urging the Government to do what they could to provide a remedy. He believed the Government could do a great deal in the desired direction. Experiments had been undertaken in certain areas in Wales which were to a great extent successful, and what they asked was that the Government should not wait thirty or forty years in order to see whether those experiments were a complete and final success, but that they should at once undertake work on a very large scale. The hon. Baronet opposite said that the work would be unremunerative, but the difference between the State and the individual was that the State could afford to wait. The State never died; and had not need to take questions such as had been raised by the hon. Gentleman opposite into consideration. The State had to look to the future; and when they considered the enormous wealth forests would be to the State they would realise how greatly reafforestation would increase the national wealth. Germany one hundred years ago was at its very lowest point, and seemed to be threatened with overwhelming ruin; but Germany declined to sacrifice its forests on any account whatever. Reafforestation would make the land more profitable; and it would also be a source of employment. Moreover, it would give work at a period of the year when it was most needed, as the greater part of the work would be done at a time when other employment was scarce; and it would therefore help to fill up the labourers' year if steps were taken in the direction indicated by his hon. friend. Moreover, it was healthy work; and if men could be kept in the country engaged in healthy employment it would be a very great advantage. It was not alone the mere growing of trees that had to be considered, but the wood industries that invariably followed. Mr. Parry, the water engineer of the Liverpool Corporation, gave interesting evidence on the subject before the Departmental Committee. He said that the catchment area of the Corporaton had been planted with trees; and as it was a long distance from railway communication a wood industry was set up, the volume of water flowing for the reservoir being utilised for the generating of electricity. In that way a profitable wood industry was established in the vicinity of the New Forest. It was in ways such as that that the forest industry could be made profitable. There were 26,000,000 acres of waste land in this country, a great portion of which could be utilised for this purpose. Timber to the value of £30,000,000 was imported every year, and of that £18,000,000 was spent on coniferous timber, which could be suitably grown in this country. The question was a great problem, which the Government would act wisely and well in tackling in a bold spirit. There were common rights in many of the waste lands which were of very little value, and which might be expropriated for the purposes of forestry, thereby adding not only to the profit and employment in the district and to the beauty of the country, but also making it easier for the commoners to rear their sheep. He trusted the Government would take this matter up. They had already made some small tentative attempts; but he hoped they would be able to deal with the matter in a bold manner.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that as an Irish Member he desired to convey to the House the Irish view on this question. His hon. friend who had just spoken said that there was proportionately more land in Wales suitable for reafforestation than in any other part of the United Kingdom. He was not certain that that statement was absolutely accurate. He believed that there was a greater proportion of such land in Ireland. He was a Member of the Forestry Association of Ireland, which had provided much useful information on this subject, and Ireland was perhaps the least wooded country in the world, and at the same time it required more wood than most other countries. Owing to the action of the Gulf Stream, the climate of Ireland had been degenerating for fifty years. In former times the whole country was covered with wood; and the part which was now in the country was the remains of the old forests. He remembered speaking to an old man in Galway, whose father told him he could walk ten miles on the branches of trees in Connemara. The absence of trees was one of the reasons why the climate of Ireland was so wet; and it was held by scientific men that if the country was properly wooded and properly drained the temperature could be raised two or three degrees. This was a matter to which the Government should give consideration, as if the climate went on degenerating they would all have to live in Noah's Arks. He was recently studying the report of the Department of the New Zealand Government charged with the management of the forests in that country. Lessons could be learned from new Colonies which appertained to the general prosperity of the United Kingdom. No question should be approached in a more serious manner than the question of reafforestation. In France one province had been reafforested with most beneficial effects, not only as regarded employment but also with reference to the health of its inhabitants.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY asked if timber was not a protected industry in France.

Mr. FIELD said he would not enter into the fiscal question, although if he did his views might not be very different from the views of the hon. Baronet. He only wished to point out that Ireland had a greater interest in the question of reafforestation than England, as there was a greater want of employment. The people in Ireland were mainly agricultural; and anything that provided the Irish agricultural labourer with employment ought to be seriously considered. One of the reasons why the rivers in Ireland were dammed up was because of the rain rushing down from the hills carrying the alluvial soil with it; and that rendered the country less fertile. If there was a sufficient quantity of wood in the country that could not happen; and the country would also produce much better crops. From all those points of view he heartily supported the Motion before the House.

He might here refer to another matter which he desired to bring before the House, the cotton corner in Lancashire and Yorkshire. No more important question could come before the House, and he was surprised that hon. Members representing the divisions concerned had not raised it. It was to his mind extraordinary that an individual body of men operating between England and America should be allowed to shut out from employment thousands of persons, and bring disaster upon the cotton operatives of this country. This Amendment had his hearty commendation, and he could not understand it being regarded as a vote of want of confidence. Surely if the King's Speech omitted to mention a particular subject of great importance such as this was it was only right to call attention to it. There was a general consensus of opinion that something ought to be done to provide employment for the people, and hon. Members on both sides of the House ought to be able to co-operate in the endeavour to see how such a state of things could be brought about. He suggested that the President of the Local Government Board should accept the Amendment and the nappoint a Committee to report as to what was the most feasible measure for carrying out the idea of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) thought the subject of the Motion was a matter of agreement, but when it came to be in the House he did not think the remedy of a Labour Department would go any great way to meet the difficulty of certain kinds of want of employment. This was really a question of how work was to be found to enable men to earn a wage, and if they considered the question thoroughly they would see it was impossible to give any Labour Department the machinery to deal with such a matter. Besides distress from general causes there was the distress from the deplorable conditions of agriculture, and the distress arising from such conditions as were now affecting Lancashire. In Lancashire what was wanted was a remedy that would operate in a far shorter time than any remedy to be expected from the institution of a Labour Department. At the same time the question was a pressing one, and ought to be dealt with in some way or other.

MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) said he did not think he should be doing his duty to his constituency if he allowed this opportunity to pass without calling attention to one fact in support of his hon. friend's contention. The condition of many of his constituents at Bethesda illustrated the necessity for concentrating more power in the hands of a Minister, or strengthening a Department. The House would remember that on several occasions he had raised the question of a terrible dispute which had taken place in his constituency. That dispute was now ended, but its evil effects were left behind. In Bethesda there were now 1,237 skilled quarrymen out of employment, although the strike was over. Over 400 of those men were men who had worked in the quarry for three-fourths of a lifetime. They were skilled labourers, and not like men who did casual work. They were very decent citizens, yet they were practically at the mercy of one employer, and the President of the Board of Trade during the dispute had confessed himself helpless owing to the limitations of the Conciliation Act.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.) said the debate on the Address, which had begun in some storm and stress, was concluding peacefully with an interesting, if somewhat discursive, debate. Both proposer and seconder had brought this subject before the House in speeches of great moderation and also of considerable force. With regard to most of the conditions of life which they described there would be found no difference of opinion in any quarter of the House. They knew these things existed, and regretted them. It was only when they came to consider the proposed remedy that acute differences must develop themselves, both in the House and outside. If the Amendment had simply stated that there was a condition of things which it was most desirable to deal with, it would have been one to which, if it had not been for the constitutional practice of the House in matters relating to the Address, no one need have offered opposition; but it was impossible to accept the declaration that a Department of Labour would be, if not a complete, a very effectual partial remedy for the state of things complained of. It was impossible for the Government to accept such an Amendment. The Government did not think there was any necessity for such a Department, or any reason for thinking that if the existing Department were to be strengthened, if it required strengthening, it could deal with the real difficulty which the hon. Gentleman and his friends had put before the House. He did not think the hon. Gentleman the Member for Merthyr had treated theDepartment quite fairly in this matter. The hon. Member knew perfectly well, and no one better, how hard it had striven in the past, and how hard it was now striving, to help guardians in their schemes for reclaiming the destitute, against reproach for their justifiable caution in taking time to consider seriously one large scheme which would devolve expense on the whole area of London. It was their duty as trustees for the ratepayers of London generally to consider carefully any scheme to make London one area for the purposes of the relief of the unemployed. Only two practical suggestions had been made in the debate. One was the creation of a Labour Department, the other afforestation. He had waited with great curiosity to hear what would be the precise advantages of a Labour Department over the two existing Departments—the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board. He heard nothing until it was suggested that a Labour Minister should make certain inquiries with a view to the establishment of Imperial workmen, county workmen, and local workmen. Was this practicable? The organisation of works which would have to be suspended with the revival of industry was not a practical suggestion, and would not really contribute to the improvement of the industrial conditions of the people. The same must be said of afforestation. It had always been the view of the House that where such work was remunerative, private enterprise would undertake it. It was impossible to believe that, were such work undertaken, it would really meet the "unemployed" difficulty which confronted them to-day. Only a small portion of the men who complained of being out of employment would be suitable for it. There was no difficulty at present in the agricultural districts, for there was plenty of work for men who were agricultural labourers.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE: At 12s. a week.

MR. WALTER LONG repudiated the idea, so far as his constituents were concerned, that the agricultural labourer's income was represented by 12s. a week. Putting aside the worthless class so amusingly described in the debate, for whom the wisdom of establishing even a kind of penal colony was doubtful, he asked whether anybody believed that either by the establishment of State farm colonies or village land appropriations, or any other means suggested in the debate, the difficulty under consideration could be dealt with in any measurable way. There was no power under which Boards of Guardians could employ men either on the land or in any other kind of work without making them paupers.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE: There is a considerable difference of opinion among competent authorities on the point whether persons employed for wages and having to sue for wages have to be regarded as paupers.

MR. WALTER LONG said he did not know how far the hon Member intended to go when he said there was a considerable difference of opinion, but in 1893 the law officers of the Crown gave an exhaustive opinion on the subject, which wound up—

> "We think that all these Acts being intended for the relief of the poor, that relief in the form of wages would be parochial relief so as to disfranchise the recipient."

That was the opinion of the then law officers of the Crown—the late Lord Russell of Killowen and the late Lord Rigby—and he feared it must be accepted as conclusive on the point as to the power of guardians to give relief which had not in its trail the taint of pauperism and the penalty of disfranchisement. He would remind the House that for more than fifty years the administration of the Poor Law by the guardians had been carried on upon principles which were entirely consistent with that opinion. They had done their best to confine the action of the guardians to the relief of destitution and distress, and to prevent them working on every kind of enterprise. Nobody would suggest that we should go back to the state of things which existed in the old days of Protection—no one would like to go back to the days which preceded the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834; and anything which would weaken that administration and turn Boards of Guardians aside from their proper sphere of work, which was the relief of destitution, would do a great deal more harm than good to the wage-earning classes of the country. As to afforestation it would no doubt be a good thing to have more forests in this country, but he could not say if it would pay to embark on such a policy, neither could he see why the State should make so large a change in its policy as was suggested in the Amendment by creating a Labour Department. Speaking for himself, for his colleagues, and for the permanent officials of his department, he might say that there existed among them all the strongest feeling of sympathy with those who suffered from these great difficulties in the industrial world, and the greatest possible desire to meet the local authorities more than half way. With that one desire at heart, they only differed as to the means of bringing it about, and it was because he so differed with the hon. Gentleman as to his methods that he felt he must resist the Amendment.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman intended to accede to the request for a united parish of London.

MR. WALTER LONG said the question was one of immense importance, and the change proposed was so great that he was afraid he could not carry out the suggestion without much more consideration than he had yet been able to give to it.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) said that the mover and seconder of the Amendment might take a good deal of satisfaction to themselves on account of the tone of the discussion and the spirit of the remarks of the President of the Local Government Board. Personally he proposed to say a few words only on the domestic aspect of the proposals of the hon. Member for the solution of a problem the gravity of which the right hon. Gentleman had fully recognised. He had very great sympathy with the object which his hon. friends had in view in proposing the establishment of a Department and Ministry of Labour. Anybody who had been confronted with industrial questions in any of the public Departments would agree with him that the present administrative system was seriously defective, first of all in the duplication of functions, and next in the conflict of jurisdiction. First of all there was the Home Office, which was primarily connected with the Department of Labour, inasmuch as it was concerned with factories, workshops, and mines. Then they had the Board of Trade, which had to look after railways and shipping and some other branches of industry; next there was the Local Government Board, which had under its supervision the work of sanitary and Poor Law authorities, which branched out into other parts of the industrial problem, and finally there was the Board of Agriculture, which dealt not only with agriculture but with the fisheries. All would agree that this was a most unbusiness-like system, and that the existing state of things was uneconomical as regarded the expenditure of labour and unsatisfactory as regarded simplicity and uniformity of administration, and therefore, in so far as the hon. Member's proposal was a proposal in the direction of simplification and readjustment, he believed there would be no difference of opinion upon it. As regarded the other side of the question —the side which concerned the local authority—they had endeavoured, on the whole with success, to secure freedom of local administration with a certain amount of indefinite and very elastic central supervision and control. It was a very difficult problem and one which could only be solved by a good deal of give-and-take on both sides; but he thought that somewhat more intimate relations might be established between the central authority and the local authorities.

In the case, for instance, of factory and workshop administration, they had on the one hand, a number of central inspectors appointed by the State, and on the other hand in respect to many questions of sanitation, particularly in workshops, they had to rely largely on local administration and inspection. It was most important that these two entirely different sets of local authorities should be brought into harmony with one another and secure co-operation of action both in principle and detail. A still more important aspect of the question was that of the powers of the local authorities themselves. He had always held the view that they could not be too liberal and elastic in giving to local authorities the power of experiments in matters of this kind. They heard a great deal in these days about the supposed evils of municipal trading; but the remedy for those evils, if there were evils, and the safeguard against risks—and he did not deny that there were risks in the application of the money of the ratepayers to industrial and other experiments—lay in the long run with the ratepayers themselves. It had always been the case in the past, and assuredly it would be in the future, that if their resources were spent in a wasteful and speculative manner the ratepayers themselves would, in the long run, take vengeance on the persons responsible. [Cries of "No."] If they did not it was their own look out. But he was very anxious that they should give the widest possible latitude of experiment to the local authorities, and he thought that in London in particular, where the division between the areas of the various authorities was to a large extent purely geographical and artificial, they ought to recognise more and more that they were dealing with one large area which had common interests—interests which, though one area might benefit more than another, were really common to the whole community. As regarded the powers of local authorities in the employment of labour to meet special emergencies, he hoped that the Local Government Board would favour wherever they could co-operative action by those local authorities. A question had been put with reference to an application in this direction for Poplar, and the answer had been given that no decision had been come to on the subject. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would give at any rate indulgent and fair and broad-minded consideration to the representations made to him by the local authorities in that respect. He believed that this debate had been of very great value in bringing out the essential community of purpose which existed among them all in relation to these matters, though they might differ as to the precise terms of the Motion. In so far as it affirmed the necessity for further simplification of administration in industrial affairs and a wider latitude of powers for the local authorities he would give it his sympathy, as he believed it would have the sympathy of the great majority of Members of the House.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he only wished to point out that the local authorities were greatly interested in arriving at some solution of this problem. He presided some time ago at a meeting, in the Guildhall, of representatives of these authorities, at which there was a general concurrence of opinion that the difficulty which now arose was in a large measure the result of the diversity of local authorities and boards which had to deal with it. He hoped that the mover of the Amendment would be satisfied with the sympathetic expressions of opinion of the President of the Local Government Board, especially as there was at this moment a Committee sitting to consider the allocation of duties between various public Departments.. A Motion had already been carried in the House for the creation of a Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and he hoped that one outcome of the debate would be the establishment of a Ministry, not merely to look after commerce which involved the means of employment, but also the means of obtaining employment by the dissemination of information and by joint action on the part of the local authorities. Probably by a considered Motion or by bringing in a Bill after the Committee already referred to had reported, a solution might be found for what was, undoubtedly, a most pressing and urgent problem.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) asked for information as to what was being done by the Committee on the co-ordination of work between the Board of Trade, the Home Office, and the Local Government Board, which was appointed last year. Was it to be reappointed, and when was it likely to report?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) said that the Committee, to which the hon, Member referred, was sitting at the present time, and he hoped that their Report would be submitted before long.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 151; Noes, 231. (Division List No. 6).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs

Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C.E.H.(Bristol, E.)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw.(Fermanagh, N.)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbigh.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Crooks.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F(Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson(King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.)
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William

Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hn. S. F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R.(Dulwich)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.

Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H.(Dumfriessh.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Fredk. G.
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter

Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East
Smith, James Parker(Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'dUniv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.), (seated, and with his hat on) asked if there was any precedent for closuring the debate on the Address when notice had been given of twenty-four further Amendments.

*MR SPEAKER: I am afraid I cannot answer that question, not having counted the number of outstanding Amendments either now or on previous occasions, but there are plenty of precedents for the closure when a considerable number of Amendments have been shut out.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: —Ayes, 232; Noes, 139. (Division List No. 7.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO

Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col H F (Middlesex
Bowles, T Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, Rt Hn J A(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T.R.(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon.A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald,Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hn Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets
Gore, Hn. S. F.Ormsby-(Linc
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq.of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson,Sir A (Stafford, W
Hope, J F(Sheffield,Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J (Midd.,Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T.(Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt Hon. Sir Fred'rick G
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray,Rt.Hn. A Graham(Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley,S.Forde (Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt.Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberet, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'dUniv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Vincent,Col.Sir C.E.H(Sheff'ld
Walrond, R.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H.(Yorks.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt. E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tdyvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick, (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Edward Strachey and Mr. Rigg.

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented to this House during the present session be referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

NEW BILLS.

[COTTAGE HOMES.

Bill to authorise the provision of Cottage Homes for the aged poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Brigg, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Sir William Wilson-Todd.

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

" To authorise the provision of Cottage Homes for the aged poor," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 87.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.

Bill to enable Local Authorities to adopt the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, ordered to be brought in by Captain Jessel, Mr. Hay, Mr. Bell, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Louis Sinclair, Sir Carne Rasch, Dr. Rutherfoord Harris, Mr. Atherley-Jones, and Mr. Bill.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

" To enable Local Authorities to adopt the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th February, and to be printed. [Bill 88.]

SALE OF BUTTER.

Bill to amend the Law with regard to the sale of butter, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Mr. Long, and Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

" To amend the Law with regard to the sale of Butter," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 89.]

DOGS.

Bill to consolidate and amend the enactments relating to injury to live stock by Dogs, and otherwise to amend the Law relating to Dogs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Mr. Long, and Mr. Solicitor-General.

DOGS BILL.

" To consolidate and amend the enactments relating to injury to live stock by Dogs, and otherwise to amend the Law relating to Dogs," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 90.]

Adjourned at ten minutes before
Six o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 22nd February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with. Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad. The same was ordered to lie on Table.

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn.

Gosport Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

New River Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]; Elysée Palace Hotel Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Govan Burgh Electricity Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committes to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Belfast and North-East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COMMERCIAL, No. 2 (1904).

Reports by His Majesty's Representatives Abroad on bounties other than those on shipping and navigation paid by the State in the countries in which they reside (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, Commercial, No. 7. (1895), [Cd. 7897].

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

Memorandum summarizing the regulations in force in Foreign Countries with regard to British commercial travellers.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

Annual statistical report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, for the year 1902–1903. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE IRISH LAND ACT.

Lord MUSKERRY, who had given notice to move to resolve "That the failure of the Land Act, 1903, to settle the land question, to promote goodwill between landlord and tenant, or even to check emigration, is due to the facts that the only classes it proposes to benefit are the substantial farmers already amply benefited by previous legislation, and that practically nothing has been done for the small tenants and cottiers, while at the same time the employment of labour has been, and will be still more, seriously affected by the displacement and exile of a residential proprietary and of the employing classes dependent on them; and therefore it is advisable to suspend the working of the said Act, as well as the further action of the Land Commission dealing with the fixing of rents, until such time as a proper inquiry can be made into the effect of such legislation on the poorer classes in Ireland," said: I do not think, my Lords, that the Leader of the Government in this House will deny that already the Irish Land Act has failed, for, if I mistake not, the noble Marquess has been obliged to notify his tenantry that there can be no talk of selling his estates on the ridiculous terms which their agrarian agitators are instructed to offer. The case of the noble Marquess is no isolated one; the same story comes from all parts of Ireland. Although the tenantry are ready to give from thirty-five to fifty years' purchase to any other than a landlord, they are instructed to offer their landlords terms so absurd as not even to disguise the intention of open confiscation and robbery. The reason of this general conspiracy is notorious; it is the realisation of a vast combination, directed by the Clerico-Jacobin leaders against the gentry, mainly because they are generally Protestant, and partly because, notwithstanding the confiscatory action of Parliament, they still continue astonishingly loyal.

Your Lordships will permit me to produce a specimen which will illustrate the organisation and the campaign that are directed against the gentry of Ireland. When your Lordships were induced to pass that Land Act, which was intended to result in separating the Irish landlords from their estates for ever—estates which it may not be irrelevant to remark were as lawfully acquired as any in Great Britain—it cannot have occurred to your Lordships that your legislation would be made the occasion for such proceedings as this. The pastoral letter which I am about to read from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare must not be supposed to imply any exceptional animosity towards the Irish gentry on the part of this Prelate. On the contrary, I feel assured that the most reverend Bishop is a perfectly fair average of his brethren, with one or two exceptions. Writing on the 16th of September last year, the Roman Catholic Prelate of Kildare reminded his flock that the new Land Act would come into operation on November 1st, and proceeded to recommend his faithful people—

> "To lose no time about ascertaining from the various landlords of the country whether they are willing to sell their properties to the tenants, and, if so, upon what terms."

Your Lordships will admit that so far already this is a sufficiently surprising illustration of what the episcopal office may signify in Ireland. What business a bishop of any denomination has to poke his nose into the private affairs of the landlords and farmers of any country I am at a loss to understand. The bishop proceeds to ordain the following extraordinary measures for organising hostile pressure against the unfortunate landowners within the area of his apostolic exertions—

> "I would suggest,"

wrote the right rev. Prelate,

> "that after last mass, on next or the following Sunday, meetings of the tenants of the various estates should be held and representatives appointed for the purpose of communicating with the several landlords. It would be advisable that these representatives should as far as possible be selected from the tenantry of the estates in question. As soon as an answer to the questions is received from the landlord, second meetings of the tenantry should be held at which the tenants might be able to agree upon the amount which they would be prepared to offer for their holdings. The representatives should receive instructions to convene a third meeting as soon as they had carried proceedings to the furthest point which they might find possible. Every precaution should be taken with a view to making the best bargain possible. I have no doubt that the clergy will be found willing to do everything in their power to facilitate the holding of the preliminary meeting, and to assist their people to secure their farms on such terms as shall enable them to look to the future with some degree of hope if not with absolute confidence."

Such, my Lords, in the moderate and guarded language of one of the ecclesiastical generals of the campaign, is an outline of the instructions disseminated throughout Ireland for the organisation of ultimatums to the proprietors, and for substituting intimidation by organised masses for the regular agreement between a landlord and his tenants. Nor does the bishop forget the part which the clerical Press has to play in the work of expropriation. He says—

> "The Press too, I know will also lend its aid by publishing from week to week the answers received from the various landlords."

How may your Lordships like the prospect to which Imperial legislation condemns the Irish landlord? The Roman Catholic bishops as organisers general of the campaign; the order of battle to be read out at mass and from the altar steps to the obedient people; the priests directing the masses of the tenantry; the newspapers publishing appropriate comments on the conduct of such landlords as decline to yield to the episcopal ultimatum. Is this really how your Lordships' House intended to settle the Irish land question?

For over a third of a century, whenever the occupants of the Treasury Bench in this country found themselves in want of Parliamentary support, they flung a slice of the Irish landlords' property to the greedy populace whose votes they thought to buy. Indeed, the fiction of amending Acts and Land Commissions might have been dropped with advantage and economy, and the simple provision might have been enacted once for all, that every fifteen years or so an additional 20 per cent. of the remaining estates of the landlords should be confiscated for the benefit of the persons who had already benefited by the previous spoliations. The taxpayers would have been saved the costly farce of the Land Courts with their tribes of salaried officials, while the robbery of the landlord would have been not less open and quite as expeditious.

The last Land Act is already a failure. A mere handful of estates, forced by necessity, have come under its proposals. One great estate, which used to support the highest dignity in the Irish Peerage, has been sacrificed for ready money by the guardians of a minor, with little respect for the future of a title divorced from property and residence. But all these cases form a miserable fraction in comparison with the general failure of the Act. Though the country has been divided into districts under clerical and episcopal brigadiers, though the tenantry have been marched under their reverend colonels and to the military music of pastoral letters, to bombard their landlords with ultimatums of robbery, strange to say the Act has not worked; and, still more strange, peace and goodwill have not been promoted between landlord and tenant.

But, my Lords, there are consequences of the recent Act still more grievous than the perpetuation and envenoming of evil relations between cultivators and proprietors. The whole land, my Lords, has been struck with a paralysis and wasting disease. Even emigration, which it was hoped would decrease, still continues. Every month since the passing of the Land Act there are numbers flying from the Irish shores. Even Roman Catholic Bishops, such as Dr. Sheehan of Waterford, have lamented that—

> "Hope itself has failed to induce the people to stay in their own land,"

and test the promised panacea of the new legislation. The coming of the new Land Act was at once the signal for the going of tens of thousands of the agricultural community to the United States, to New Zealand, anywhere out of the reach of the agrarian activity of the present Government legislation. By the same blow the landowners have been disheartened by the menace of final ruin, while the cultivating and labouring classes are flying from the prospect of a new race of small landholders without either the will or the capacity to give employment to industry.

This, my Lords, is the really serious feature of the Land Act's failure, that all its promises, deceptive though they be, have been for that class of well-to-do farmers, already demoralised by confiscatory legislation and deliberate deterioration of land with a view to continual reduction of rents by the Land Courts, and nothing has been even promised to the vast majority of the population of Ireland. Not only to the town trades and industries, not only to the small tillers and agricultural labourers generally, but especially in the congested districts, the new Land Act has been the merest mockery of the distress of the population. It seems to have been the sole object of the authors of the last Land Act, like its predecessors, to tickle the cupidity of the well-to-do farmers from whose ranks Maynooth is recruited; and provided that Maynooth and its partisans were encouraged, all the rest of the country, gentry and artisans, civilisation and labour, might go to ruin. The Land Act has improved no congested district; it has prevented no small farmer, no agricultural labourer, from realising his little property and flying beyond the Atlantic.

The operation of the Land Act must inevitably diminish the demand for labour, must diminish the demand for the products of trade and industry, must diminish every kind of employment which is given in a country by the higher classes of the community. As you place Ireland in the hands of men of low culture, of uncultivated tastes, with little desire for improvement, with no call upon their exertions but the demand for fresh extensions of ecclesiastical edifices and endowments, you strip all the higher classes of town trades, as well as the mass of agricultural labourers, of the whole of those employers and customers, who, belonging to the gentry and the learned professions connected with the gentry, have been condemned to impoverishment and banishment by such legislation as is embodied in the recent Land Act. My Lords, you cannot have the two things together; you cannot have a country deprived, by your legislation, of all the classes who in all countries are the chief employers of labour, and the chief patrons of culture and taste, and at the same time have a country abounding in all things which your legislation has deliberately destroyed. If you shut up the castles, mansions, and country houses, and the residences of all those professions and callings which go with a resident nobility and gentry, you must deprive that country and community of the classes, the industries, the occupations, and the employments which are fostered by the higher classes of society. I may be told that in a generation, or three generations, the descendants of the rough and violent farmers of the Land League will develop tastes for refinement and culture which will cause the revival of all the artistic trades and all the higher professions. My Lords, I doubt it.

The tendency of ignorance is to beget ignorance, and the incentives to progress come from above and not from below. But even granting that towards the middle of the century we may hope to see a peasantry with the manners and requirements of men of culture and taste, what is to become of all Ireland in the meanwhile? It is true that the Maynooth party, which is not without admirers in the existing Government, proposes to improve the situation by jealously educating the different creeds in separate and hostile academies, and by the practice of estrangement, and the inculcation of sectarianism, to promote a millennium of patriotism and Christianity. My Lords, I think that such an educational policy would be as great a success as the Land Act. The Land Act, like all its predecessors, has been that worst of failures—it has done evil and promoted dishonesty with no resulting advantage even to the classes in whose name its misdeeds were committed. The farmers are more demoralised and discontented than ever. One of their more moderate leaders, Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., avows that nothing short of compulsory confiscation will now meet the appetites of his clients. A more numerous class of the community, the notorious Catholic Association, have been encouraged to proceed from the ruin of the landlord to the boycotting of all traders and professional men of a different religious denomination. This, my Lords, is the nemesis of public dishonesty, of robbery inculcated by Act of Parliament. In proportion as such legislation extends its hold upon the public fancy and debilitates the public conscience, its teaching and inspiration tend to contaminate all the springs of public life, and every class of the community becomes involved in the pestilence that you let loose upon the gentry and the landlords, thinking the gentry and the landlords would be the victims alone.

Moved to resolve, "That the failure of the Land Act, 1903, to settle the land question, to promote goodwill between landlord and tenant, or even to check emigration, is due to the facts that the only classes it proposes to benefit are the substantial farmers already amply benefited by previous legislation, and that practically nothing has been done for the small tenants and cottiers, while at the same time the employment of labour has been, and will be still more, seriously affected by the displacement and exile of a residential proprietary and of the employing classes dependent on them; and therefore it is advisable to suspend the working of the said Act, as well as the further action of the Land Commission dealing with the fixing of rents, until such time as a proper inquiry can be made into the effect of such legislation on the poorer classes in Ireland."—(*Lord Muskerry.*)

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN: My Lords, I have listened with great attention to the speech of the noble Lord, and I regret very much that he should have thought it necessary to bring on this Motion at the present time. He is not supported by the Irish Peers in this House, nor will he meet with the approval of any class in Ireland who take an interest in the extension of land purchase. I believe the noble Lord's Motion to be premature and immature—premature from the fact that he has not allowed the Land Act sufficient time in which to judge of its working; and immature because he has not proved his case that the Act is a failure. The noble Lord began by saying that the Act was a total failure, and he quoted the case of the tenantry of the noble Marquess the Leader of the House, and the fact that they could not agree as to terms of purchase. There is no reason to think, because the terms of purchase cannot be at once agreed upon between the landlord and tenant, that the Act which was passed to effect such purchase is a failure. We must give it time to work. When sufficient time has been given, I think that without doubt it will be clearly proved that the Act is not a failure. It is within your Lordships' recollection that the Land Bill of last year occupied the attention of both Houses of Parliament for a considerable period. It became an Act at the end of the session, and came into operation in the beginning of November; it has therefore barely been working for four months. Yet the noble Lord stands up in his place and says, without any proof, and really without any authority, that the Act is a total failure. The noble Lord is a gallant sportsman and wants to drive his coach and four through that Act; but I am afraid that his horses are not well-trained at the present time, and that he must wait a considerable period before he will be able to attain his object. I have risen merely to say that I think it is a pity the noble Lord has brought forward this question at the present moment. He began his speech with a tirade against the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. Those gentlemen are well able to take care of themselves. At the same time I would suggest to the noble Lord that he should postpone his Motion for a period of three or five years so as to give the Act sufficient time to work, and then if he is able to come before your Lordships and prove the statements which he has submitted to-night, no doubt he will get a patient hearing from everyone.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, after the observations of the noble Duke but little remains for me to say. The noble Lord who has introduced this Motion has rested it upon doleful prophecies and utterly unsupported statements. I believe, so far as I know, that he stands alone in your Lordships' House in presenting those views. There are very many noble Lords connected with Ireland, either as representative Peers or connected by family or property, who take a keen interest in everything that affects Ireland, and in the legislation relating to it, and I should be very much surprised if any of those noble Lords were found to range themselves by the side of the noble Lord who moved this Motion and say one word in support of the speech which he has made. The noble Lord really has not moved his Motion. For proof of that your Lordships have only to glance at the Paper which contains the terms of the extraordinary Motion that he has put before the House. I doubt if my noble friend can have realised the extent or the scope of what he was presenting, or that he at all realised the remedy that he suggests: he certainly has not said a syllable about that remedy in his speech. He said something about differences of opinion that have arisen in the ascertainment of the price of an estate and the value of farms and properties, but I would point out that the first offers and first refusals often have to be reconsidered again and again. I absolutely decline to be drawn into a discussion on the administration of the Act, which must be left to those who are entrusted by Parliament with the great responsiblity of seeing what is just and right in that behalf. It would, I venture to think, be entirely unbecoming for your Lordships to allow yourselves to be drawn into a discussion as to the way in which an Act, which has only just been passed, is approached by the different parties, who are deeply interested in the manner in which it is to be carried out.

My noble friend repeated two words seven or eight times—one was the word "culture," and the other was the word "failure." He seemed to derive comfort from the repetition of the word "failure," and sometimes he said "the admitted failure." Who admits it? Anyone in his senses will deny it. The Act has only been working some three months, and we know from debates elsewhere, and from figures that have been published, that its operation has been sound and beneficent. Already something like £1,500,000 worth of land has been sold, and surely that is very satisfactory in the short time that the Act has been in operation. Again, over 3,000 holdings have been purchased by the occupying tenants. The work is still going on well, every attention is paid to the administration of the Act, and there is every expectation that its operation will grow and extend. Is it not unreasonable, in the case of such a great Act as this, to come forward in such a short period and expect that you will be able to be in a position to pass any judgment upon it? There is nothing to prevent small tenants availing themselves of the provisions in the Act. There was a considerable struggle when the Act was passing through the other House, and also here, to ensure that the larger tenants were not excluded. That was a great and legitimate struggle, but there was no struggle the other way, because there was nothing in the Act to prevent the smaller tenants availing themselves of it.

What remedy has the noble Lord suggested? I believe in the power of an Executive Government and of a Sovereign as much as anyone, but his remedy is that we should wave a magician's wand and arrest the working of the Land Act. Did your Lordships ever hear anything like it. How is the Government to suspend an Act of Parliament that is working, and whose operations are being carried on daily by a staff appointed and selected for that purpose? Such a thing as that is not within the region of argument or discussion. My noble friend goes on to say that by a similar exercise of impossible power we are to stay all the fair-rent inquiries in Ireland. Well, my Lords, anyone who knows anything of Irish land administration knows that it dates back to Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1881. That is now the law of the land, and it has been dealt with by amendment in repeated legislation since; and the idea that it is within the scope or power of any Executive Government, without coming to Parliament, to suspend the working, not only of the last great Act, but of the entire Land Code in Ireland, is not a matter which is within the range of practical discussion. I venture to hope that my noble friend, if he is not satisfied entirely with what has been said, will see that his Motion is, at all events, a little out of place at the present time.

Lord MUSKERRY: In reply to the noble and learned Lord I may say that I am not at all satisfied, for the principal points mentioned in my Motion and in my speech have not been alluded to. I refer to the question of the unfortunate agricultural labourers of Ireland and also that of the town trade, neither of which questions has been dealt with. As, however, I am not going to meet with any support in your Lordships' House I can only ask permission to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve on the Standing Committee:—

L. Archbp. of Canterbury.
E. Halsbury. (*L. Chancellor.*)
L. Archbp. of York.
E. Vane. (*M. Londonderry.*) *L. President.*
M. Salisbury. (*L. Privy Seal.*)
D. Bedford.
D. Devonshire.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
M. Bath.
E. Clarendon. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Stamford.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Carnwath.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Portsmouth.
E. Hardwicke
E. Spencer.
E. Malmesbury
E. Westmeath
E. Belmore
E. Onslow
E. Grey
E. Morley
E. Cawdor
E. Camperdown
E. Lichfield
E. Yarborough
E. Dartrey
E. Northbrook
E. Lytton
E. Selborne
E. Ancaster
E. Crewe
V. Falkland
V. Gordon (*E. Aberdeen*)
V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*)
V. Hampden
V. Cross
V. Knutsford
V. Llandaff
V. Goschen
V. Ridley
V. Churchill
L. Bp. London
L. Bp. Hereford
L. Bp. Rochester
L. Zouche of Haryngworth
L. Windsor
L. Clifford, of Chudleigh
L. Barnard
L. Saltoun
L. Balfour
L. Boyle (*E. Cork and Orrery*)
L. Kenyon
L. Stewart of Garlies (*E. Galloway*)
L. Ribblesdale
L. Harris
L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*)
L. Kilmarnock (*E. Errol*)
L. Poltimore
L. Denman
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*)
L. Leigh
L. Elgin (*E. Elgin and Kincardine*)
L. Belper
L. Brougham and Vaux
L. Kinnaird
L. Lawrence
L. Wolverton
L. Sandhurst
L. Aberdare
L. Norton
L. Reay
L. Tweedmouth
L. Northbourne
L. Herries
L. Monkswell
L. Ashbourne
L. Thring
L. Macnaghten
L. Ashcombe
L. Hawkesbury
L. Stanmore
L. Davey
L. Burghclere
L. James
L. Heneage
L. Ludlow
L. Glanusk
L. Avebury
L. Alverstone
L. Allerton

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Adjourned at ten minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morro half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 22nd February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. **Speaker** laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Midland Railway Bill, Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords].

Mr. **Speaker** laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following case, viz.:—Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. **Speaker** laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 18th day of this instant February, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting (London) Bill.

Brixham Gas Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill; Ryde Gas Bill; Southend-on-Sea Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Bill. "To authorise the trustees of the Clyde Navigation to construct a dock at Shieldhall, and other works; to borrow additional money; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time.

Clyde Navigation (Works) Bill. "To authorise the trustees of the Clyde Navigation to construct quays, wharves, and basins at Yorkhill and Merklands, and river walls, tramways, and other works; to make further provision with respect to the storage of goods, tolls, and rates, and the borrowing of additional money; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time.

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do nominate a Committee, not exceeding Eleven Members, to be called the Police and Sanitary Committee, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the provisions of the general Law.

"That Standing Orders 150 and 173A apply to all such Bills.

"That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

"That Four be the quorum of the Committee.

"That if the Committee shall report to the Committee of Selection that any Clauses of any Bill referred to them (other than Clauses containing police and sanitary regulations) are such, as having regard to the terms of reference it is not in their opinion necessary or advisable for them to deal with, the Committee of Selection shall thereupon refer the Bill to a Select Committee, who shall consider those Clauses and so much of the Preamble of the Bill as relates thereto, and shall determine the expenditure (if any) to be authorised in respect of the parts of the Bill referred to them. That the Committee shall deal with the remaining Clauses of such Bill, and so much of the Preamble as relates thereto, and shall determine the period and mode of repayment of any money authorised by the Select Committee to be borrowed and shall report the whole Bill to the House, stating in their Report what parts of the Bill have been considered by each Committee.

"That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to sit as two Committees, and in that event to apportion the Bills referred to the Committee between the two Committees, each of which shall have the full powers of, and be subject to the instructions which apply to, the undivided Committee, and that Three be the quorum of each of the two Committees."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said that a year previously when a similar Motion was on the Paper he put down an Amendment which by accident was not discussed, and he had not done so this year because everyone knew that the present was a moribund Parliament, and probably it was the last time the Committee would be set up by this Parliament. If hon. Members referred to the records they would find that there used to be considerable discussion as to the policy of setting up of this Commitee, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton and other Members expressed strong opinions in regard to it. That arose no doubt from an unfortunate state of things which then existed, under which the Committee gave every little local authority all the powers they asked for in excess of and distinct from general powers. Hon. Members would remember how the boroughs of Torquay and Eastbourne obtained powers which they put to such use as to make it necessary for the House to step in and deprive them of such powers. Since then a change had taken place in the policy of the Committee, which now required very strict proof as to the necessity for powers asked for. That principle had been pretty well established, so that it was not necessary to again raise the point. But there was one question he would like to touch upon, and that was as to the present exemption of members of this Committee from the necessity of referring to the declaration provided in Standing Order 117 as to the absence of personal interest or interest on the part of their constituencies in the matters with which the Committee had to deal. He was not making the observation in the slightest degree in a personal sense, but he could not see why the members of this Committee should not be subject to the conditions which attached to membership of other Committees, and he certainly should as at present advised raise the matter in the next Parliament.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order! order! It is a quarter past Two. The debate stands adjourned until to-morrow.

And, it being a quarter past Two of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

PETITIONS.

LICENCE HOLDERS.

Petition for redress of grievances: Whitby; and Bollington and Butley; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Bradford; Northumberland; Manchester; Kirkcaldy (two); Rochdale; Liskeard (two); Billshill; Port Mulgrave; Market Drayton; Melbury; Castleton; Leigh; Bannockburn; Sandgate; Chester; Bedford; Ilford; Hounslow; Ratcliffe; Ongar; Waterford; Bromley by Bow; Liverpool; Finedon (two); Kincardine; Berwick; North Salford; Penmoch; Llwynfriod; Swelson; Llwynygroes; Longsight; Weston-super-Mare; Salford; Newcastle-on-Tyne; North Hants; Handsworth; Smethwick; St. Mellons; and Newbridge; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 3rd February; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 69.]

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen for 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 70.]

FOREIGN BOUNTIES (COMMERCIAL, No. 2, 1904).

Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Representatives Abroad on Bounties other than those on Shipping and Navigation paid by the State in the countries in which they reside [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Poisoning Fatalities at Portsmouth Lunatic Asylum.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been directed to the recent deaths, by poisoning, of four inmates of the Portsmouth Lunatic Asylum, and to the evidence given at the inquiry by the coroner, disclosing want of care in the dispensing arrangements in that public institution; and whether, in view of the danger to life involved in leaving the important duty of compounding medicines to unqualified persons, steps will be taken by the Department to ensure that every dispensary under the control of a local authority shall be in the charge of a person holding the qualification under the Pharmacy Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The inquest in this case is not yet concluded; but my hon. friend may be assured that the point to which he draws attention will be carefully considered.

Water Supply to Schools in Crofting Counties.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many public schools in each of the crofting counties have no water supply laid on to the premises.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) My only information in regard to the subject of the hon. Member's Question is based upon the observations made by the inspectors of the Education Department in the course of their visits to schools. The matter, however, is primarily one for the sanitary authority, and no exact statistics can be compiled from the inspectors' reports. Many of the schools in these districts appear not to have a supply of water laid on by pipes; but it does not follow that other methods of supply more suitable to the local circumstances may not be satisfactory. Wherever they have reason to think that it is deficient, the inspectors call attention to the fact and urge improvement.

Infectious Diseases in Crofting Counties—Closing of Schools.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many public schools have been closed in each of the crofting counties during the past year on account of an outbreak of infectious disease, the name of each such school, the period during which it was closed, and the nature of the disease.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I am sending the hon. Member a list giving the information asked for in his Question. The list is too voluminous to form part of a printed answer to a Question.

New Inclosure in Hyde Park.

Mr. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he will state by whose authority a new inclosure has been formed in the centre of Hyde Park, on the north side of the Serpentine; to what purposes will it be devoted; what is the extent of the piece of ground taken from the use of the public; and whether the inclosure is to be of a temporary or of a permanent character.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The new inclosure in Hyde Park, to which my hon. friend refers, is being formed by the Office of Works, and will contain plant-houses and forcing-frames for the plants required for the service of the Royal parks, in place of those now in use, which stand in Kensington Gardens and spoil the architectural effect of the Palace and of Wren's Orangery. Some of the existing houses are in bad condition, and it is essential that they should be renewed. There has always been a service-yard in Hyde Park, and the same spot was considered to be a far more suitable and central position for plant-houses for the parks. It is therefore determined to remove the plant and frame ground altogether to Hyde Park by an enlargement of the existing service-yard. The work is specially provided for in the Vote for Royal Parks, the first instalment of the cost having been passed in May last. The area now occupied by the houses and frames in Kensington Gardens will, when vacated, be laid out as an ornamental garden. Substantially the public will gain three acres of lawn and flower-beds in exchange for about an equal area of grass-land taken into the new frame-ground. When the works are all finished and the plantations grown there will be also a gain in picturesque effect, both in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

Postal Deliveries in County Tyrone.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, in a district of country from three quarters of a mile to three miles around Fivemiletown, county Tyrone, there is only a tri-weekly delivery of letters and parcels, the postman passing daily within a few perches of part of the district; and if he will endeavour to have this grievance remedied.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) It is the fact that in a part of the district served from Fivemiletown a delivery is afforded on three days a week only. I have made inquiry on the subject of improving the service, but as regards the greater part of this district it appears that the cost already incurred is relatively high, and that no further expense for increasing the frequency of the delivery would be warranted. The case is not so clear, however, as regards Altagoaghan, Tattinabuddagh, and the neighbourhood, and I am having further inquiry made with the view of ascertaining whether any improvement would be warranted in the service to those places. I will communicate the result of the inquiry to the hon. Member.

Accommodation at West Ham Union Schools.

Sir ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that the certificate of the Union Schools of the West Ham Guardians, which in November, 1901, was exceeded by 169 children and in November, 1902, and September, 1903, was still exceeded, is at present exceeded by over 200 children; that the boys are entirely without day-room accommodation; that 144 girls have day-room accommodation of 23 feet 6 inches by 18 feet 2 inches only; that eighty-six infants have a day-room in which they also take their meals of 27 feet 2 inches by 18 feet 2 inches only; and whether, seeing that this overcrowding makes it impossible to isolate infectious diseases, and that skin and eye complaints are present in the same dormitory, he will urge on the guardians the necessity of ascertaining if all those children at present dependent on the rates are entitled to such maintenance, and of providing temporary accommodation by hiring houses in which small groups of children might be placed.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am aware of the overcrowding at these schools, and have impressed upon the guardians the serious responsibility which attaches to them in this matter. The guardians inform me that they are endeavouring to make arrangements for boarding out some of the children beyond the union. I am still in communication with them, and I have urged them to hire homes in or near the union or to provide temporary buildings in order to remedy at once the present state of things. I have also suggested that they should have a "call over" of the children with a view of ascertaining if the numbers cannot be reduced.

Performing Elephants at the London Hippodrome.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the item on the programme of entertainment at the London Hippodrome, entitled, the Plunging Elephants, where the elephants are forced on to a steep incline and precipitated into the water; and whether he proposes to take any action to stop such a proceeding.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have no special power in this matter; but, having made inquiry, I am informed that no force is used in the performance. The elephants, under the direction of a keeper, proceed to the head of the chute, and thence slide into the water. There is no cruelty; and the animals are said to be well kept and cared for.

Vivisection at University College Hospital—Visits of Inspector.

Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the statement made by Mr. Bayliss, in his evidence in Bayliss *v.* Coleridge, that the inspector appointed under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, visited University College on an average once a week during the period Mr. Bayliss was conducting his researches and lectures there; whether he will state the exact number of visits paid by the inspector to University College during the year 1902; whether the inspector is officially connected with University College; and how many times the inspector visited each of the other places registered for vivisection in 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) Twelve visits to University College in 1902 were reported by the inspector; but I understand that owing to his constant attendance at the college he was able to pay many visits to the laboratory; and these, when he found nothing special to report, were not included in his return. The Inspector is Professor of Anatomy in University College, London. During 1902 the inspector and the assistant inspector paid 106 visits to the other registered places in England and Scotland, making an average of just under two visits to each place.

Vivisection—Visits of Inspectors.

Dr. SHIPMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that the inspector appointed under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, only witnessed the whole of one and part of eleven experiments out of the total of 14,906 performed in 1902, he will consider the advisability of increasing the number of inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) It has to be remembered that of the 14,906 experiments mentioned in the Question, 12,776 were of the character of inoculations or feeding experiments. Further, apart from the actual experiments witnessed, large numbers of the animals have been seen by the inspectors, and their condition after the initial experiment examined. I am satisfied that the inspection is sufficient to keep me fully informed as to the practical working of the Act and the observance of its provisions; but if at any time I come to the conclusion that more inspection is desirable, I shall not hesitate to endeavour to obtain the necessary increase of staff.

Promotion in the Civil Service.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state how many Civil Service writers were promoted to the Second Division under the provisions of the Treasury Minute of December, 1886; how many Civil Service writers have been promoted to the establishment as assistant clerks (Abstractor Class) under Treasury Minute of August, 1889; how many temporary clerical assistants have been promoted to the establishment as assistant clerks (New Class); how many senior assistant clerks (Abstractor Class) have been promoted to the Second Division under Clause 15 of the Order in Council of 29th November 1898, and what proportion of these relate to Ireland; and how many assistant clerks (New Class) have been promoted to the Second Division.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The numbers are 70, 600, 151, 121 (of whom 18 or 15 per cent., were in exclusively Irish Departments), and 13 respectively.

Unexpended Balances—Scotch and Irish Votes.

Mr. WEIR: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, having regard to the fact that the unexpended balances of Votes surrendered to the Exchequer by Government Departments during the last ten years amount to £11,613,119 19s. 9d., will he state how much of this sum represents Scottish and Irish Votes respectively, irrespective of the Post Office and Inland Revenue Departments.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The unexpended balances surrendered to the Exchequer on Scottish Votes in the last ten years amounted to £204,013 15s. 6d., and on Irish Votes to £718,136 7s. 11d. These figures relate only to Votes which provide exclusively for Scottish and Irish Services. They omit not only the Votes for the Post Office and Revenue Departments, but all other Votes of a general character.

Estate Duty on Colonial Securities.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Estate Duty Department at Somerset House require payment of Estate Duty in this country in respect of colonial securities belonging to deceased persons domiciled in a British colony where the bonds, debentures, or certificates representing such securities are locally situate in this country, notwithstanding that such securities have already paid Estate Duty in the colony; and, if so, will he remedy this state of affairs by the insertion of a clause in the forthcoming Finance Bill which shall be retro-active, and in the meantime direct the authorities to suspend proceedings for the recovery of

Estate Duty in any case where Estate Duty has already been paid in a British colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) It is correct that Estate Duty is payable in this country in respect of colonial securities belonging to deceased persons domiciled in a British colony or foreign country where the documents of title are in this country at the time of the death and the securities are marketable property here. This rule applied equally to the old Probate Duty, which the Estate Duty replaced, and there seems no sufficient reason for an alteration of the law.

Postage on Type-written Circulars.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will say whether a circular which is printed in imitation of typewriting, enclosed in an unsealed envelope, is liable to the letter rate of postage; and, if so, will he explain why a distinction is drawn between such printing and printing in ordinary type.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Circulars printed in imitation of type-writing and enclosed in unsealed envelopes are admitted to the privilege of the halfpenny post on condition that they are handed in at a head or branch Post Office, that special attention is called to their nature, and that at least twenty copies are posted at the same time. Unless these conditions are complied with the circulars are liable to letter postage. There is no infallible and easily applied test which will enable the Post Office to distinguish between type-written letters and circulars printed to imitate them, and it is necessary to impose the special conditions referred to in order to afford evidence that the halfpenny post is not being improperly used for the transmission of typewritten correspondence.

Annual Leave in the Edinburgh Post Office.

Sir ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the period for the annual leave of absence of the supervising body in the postal branches at Edinburgh, which for some years was confined to the six months, April to September, is now to be extended, so as to include March and October; and whether, seeing that on the telegraph side of the same office, with as large a staff of supervisors, no difficulty is found in giving the annual leave within a period of six months, he can see his way to continuing the same privilege to the postal supervising staff.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am informed that the inclusion of March and October in the period for the annual leave of the supervising officers in the postal branches at Edinburgh is not an innovation. I will inquire whether the present arrangements can be modified; but I fear that it may be impossible to do so without waste of staff.

Royal Naval Reserve Stations in the West Highlands.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state whether it is proposed to establish Royal Naval Reserve stations at any other places in the Western Highlands besides Ullapool.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) It is also proposed to build a Royal Naval Reserve drill battery at Portree, in the Island of Skye.

Progress of the Dingwall and Cromarty Railway.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state what progress is being made with the Dingwall and Cromarty Railway.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) No progress appears to have been made in the actual construction of the railway, but I am informed that an early meeting of the directors of the company has been fixed to arrange for the issue of the company's capital.

Changes in Tariffs of Foreign Countries.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the President of the Board of Trade in what Parliamentary Paper a succinct statement of the various changes in the tariffs of foreign countries during 1902 and 1903 can be found; and, if such does not exist, whether he will cause such a Paper to be compiled and laid upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Return of Foreign Import Duties issued by the Board of Trade contains a detailed account of the rates of duty levied in the principal commercial countries on the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom. A summary is prefixed to the Return showing briefly the principal changes since the publication of the previous Return. The last number of this Return (which is now published annually) was issued in November last (Cd. 1735 of 1903), and the previous Return was dated May, 1902 (Cd. 780 of 1902). Particulars of changes of foreign tariffs are noted as they occur in the Board of Trade Journal. If the information contained in these Returns is not sufficient for the hon. Member's purpose I shall be glad if he will communicate with me.

Transfer of Royal Colleges of Art or Science to University of London.

MR. ALLHUSEN (Hackney, Central): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether it is proposed to transfer either the Royal College of Art or the Royal College of Science to the University of London; and, if so, when such transfer will take effect.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) No proposal is before the Board to transfer the Royal College of Art or the Royal College of Science to the University of London.

Indentured Coolies on Indian Tea Plantations.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Secretary of State for India will he say the number of coolies working under indentures in the tea plantations, and the dates of the Acts sanctioning their employment; and will he lay upon the Table the regulations under which these indentured labourers work.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The latest Returns received by me are for the year 1902–3, and show that at the end of June last there were 93,278 coolies in Assam under indenture (out of a total labour population of 650,937). The Acts under which these persons are indentured are Act I. of 1882 and Act VI. of 1901, the latter Act superseding the former except as regards contracts made under the Act of 1882 not yet expired. The regulations applicable to indentured labourers are contained in these Acts, which will be found in the Library of the House. I may also refer to the Return presented by my predecessor in April last in compliance with the Address moved by the hon. Member for the Northern Division of Manchester, which is likewise in the Library.

Sales on the Cusack Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the proposed sale of 860 acres of the lands of the Cusack estate to certain persons at a figure of twenty seven and a half years purchase requires the sanction of the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, can he state when the matter is likely to be brought before them.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) This estate is administered in the Land Judge's Court. I have no information on the matters alluded to in the Question. But I learn that the solicitor having carriage of the proceedings will apply forthwith to the Land Judge for an order authorising the Estates Commissioners to issue a request under Section 7 of the Act of 1903, with a view to their making an offer for the purchase of the property.

Coal Supplies for Irish Public Buildings.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will make inquiry into the question of the coal supplies for the model schools and other public buildings in Ireland under the control of the Board of Works; and if he will state in particular on what system are the coal supplies for the Enniscorthy model schools provided.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Tenders for coal supplies for model schools and other public buildings in Ireland are invited in the usual manner by advertisement published in the local Press.

This course was adopted in the case of the schools specially referred to in the Question.

Pensions of Irish National Teachers.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many Irish National Teachers have been placed on the I pension establishment since the new pension rules came into force on the 1st April, 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The number of teachers retired on pension since the date mentioned is 740.

Kenagh Drainage District—Election of Board.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say who are the electors for the drainage district of Kenagh, county Longford; when the term of the office of the present board expires; and when and where the next election will be held.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The electors are the proprietors of lands in the drainage district. A nominal list of these is open, I apprehend, to the inspection of any person interested, upon application to the Drainage Trustees. The trustees were elected for three years; the date of the last election was 12th June, 1901. I have no information in respect of the precise date and place of the next election.

Sale of King Harman Estate.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say, in connection with the sale of the King Harman (Kenagh, county Longford) Estate, whether any outside proposals have been received for the purchase of the village of Kenagh; and, if so, will he direct the Estates Commissioners to give the occupying tenants preference.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Negotiations are proceeding for the sale of so much of this village as may be sold under the Land Purchase Acts to occupying tenants.

Attendance of Resident Magistrates at Dungiven Petty Sessions.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say what is the rule regulating the attendance of resident magistrates at petty sessions held within the districts assigned to them by the Executive Government; and how many petty sessions Courts held at Dungiven, county Londonderry, were attended by the resident magistrate within whose district this petty sessions Court is during the past twelve months.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) A resident magistrate is required to attend the various Courts of petty sessions in his district unless prevented by illness or other sufficient reason. There were twelve such Courts at Dungiven during the past year. The resident magistrate was present at four of these; on four occasions he was absent through illness; and on four occasions he was absent on leave. On every occasion there was a good attendance of local justices.

Sale of the O'Brien Estate, County Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state why the negotiations for the sale of the O'Brien estate in Cornakelly and Corglass, county Longford, are not proceeding; and whether, seeing that the middle landlord's deeds, loss of which hitherto obstructed the sale, have now been produced, he will direct that the proceedings under the 40th Section of the Act of 1896 be now completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The deeds were only recently forthcoming. Negotiations for sale cannot be entered upon until the rental has been settled. There will be no avoidable delay in the proceedings.

Completion of Pier at Loughshinny, County Dublin.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why no funds are available for the completion of the pier at Loughshinny, county of Dublin, seeing that it appears from the latest report of the Irish Board of Works that there were, on the 31st March, 1903, funds to the amount of £12,450, to meet the cost of works in progress and of any additional works to be undertaken under the Sea Fisheries Act, under which the existing Loughshinny works have been constructed.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The available balance of the Sea Fisheries Fund at the present date is only £7,330. This money will be required to meet the necessities of fishing centres of relatively greater importance than Loughshinny.

Construction of Piers at Falchorrib and Gortnasate.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is proposed to commence the construction of the piers at Falchorrib and Gortnasate, under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is not practicable to fix a date for the commencement of either work. Preliminary plans and an estimate for a breakwater at Falchorrib are being prepared and will very shortly be completed. With respect to Gortnasate, the Government is in communication with the Congested Districts Board respecting the necessary allocation of the funds as between the harbour works and approach road. A decision will be come to without delay.

Construction of Boat-slip at Port-a-raid.

Mr. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Rossbeg fishery in Dowros Bay, county Donegal, is hampered by lack of adequate landing facilities; and whether steps will be taken to improve these by the construction of an additional boat-slip at Port-a-raid or elsewhere.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The question of the sufficiency of the landing accommodation at Rossbeg will be considered by the Congested Districts Board at its next meeting.

Immigrants to New South African Colonies—Special Facilities to ex-Soldiers.

Dr. SHIPMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any and, if so, what steps are being taken to facilitate immigrants from this country or the Colonies settling upon the land of the recently-acquired territory in South Africa; whether any, and, if any, what special facilities have been given to those who fought in the late South African war, and who were desirous of settling upon the Transvaal territory.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Settlement on the land in the new Colonies is regulated by the Ordinances printed at pp. 25 and 69 of Cd. 1463. By Section 7 of the Orange River Colony Ordinance and Section 13 (5) of the Transvaal Ordinance a certain preference is given to applicants who have served.

Chinese Coolies in Transvaal Mines.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is proposed to make regulations to prevent the Chinese coolies in the Transvaal mine compounds being mulcted of their wages by any truck system; if not, will he take steps to prevent it; and whether the officer to be stationed in China to inform the Chinese coolies of the conditions of service in the Transvaal mines will be in the pay of the Transvaal Government or of the mine-owners or their contractors.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Lord Milner informs me that the law of the South African Republic, No. 18 of 1896, provides against truck system and has purposely never been repealed, that the truck system does not now exist on the mines and that its introduction in connection with Chinese labour has never been contemplated. The officer in China will be in the pay of the Transvaal Government.

Queen Anne's Bounty—Relief of Poorer Benefices from Payment of First-fruits and tenths.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state what steps have been taken by the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty to relieve the poorer benefices from payment of first-fruits and tenths; and whether arrangements can be made under the existing law for giving similar relief from payments of fees for presentation or induction to the poorer benefices out of the funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The governors of Queen Anne's Bounty are now empowered to make grants to benefices not exceeding £200 a year in net annual income, and still chargeable with first-fruits and tenths, or either of them, to meet the sums from time to time becoming due in respect of these charges. They have communicated with the incumbents of all benefices still chargeable with first-fruits and tenths, and have received applications in respect of 750 benefices. Of these, 366 have been relieved of payment; 85 proved to be ineligible, as exceeding £200 per annum in value; the remainder are under consideration. The suggestion in the second part of the Question cannot be carried into effect without legislation.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

South State African Railways.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what are the Imperial Military Railways for which £900,000 is asked in the Supplementary Estimates, what will the total expenditure upon them be, and has Parliament approved of the undertakings.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): This sum represents the balance of expenditure in connection with the State railways in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies for the period ending 30th June, 1902, up to which date these railways were administered under the direction of the military authorities.

MR. LOUGH: Has this ever been mentioned to Parliament before?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir, but it has now come into account for the first time.

1st Army Corps Barrack Arrangements.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the reason of certain regiments being shown in recent Army Orders as under orders to move from Sheffield or Lichfield to 1st Army Corps, instead of from one named station to another.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There are various barracks in and about Aldershot in the 1st Army Corps Command and they are of different capacity. It is considered desirable to give the General Officer Commanding a free hand in placing the battalions transferred to his command in such barracks as he may think fit.

South African Garrison.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will say whether the garrison regiments now stationed in the Mediterranean are under orders for South Africa; and, if so, what is the reason for this change of quarters; what are the stations in South Africa to which these regiments are being sent; and what will be the increased cost of these garrison regiments in South Africa as compared with ordinary regiments.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: These garrison battalions are under orders for South Africa and will be quartered at Pietermaritzburg (until quarters are ready at Pretoria), Standerton, Bloemfontein, and Harrismith. It was found impracticable to house more than a few of their families in Malta and Gibraltar, and it was, therefore, held to be preferable in the best interests of the men and their families to remove them to South Africa. The additional cost of a garrison battalion in South Africa as compared with a line battalion is about £20,000 a year; but against this a saving of £10,000 a year now paid as separation allowance to the families which cannot be accommodated in the Mediterranean should be set off.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: What is the percentage of married men?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Very large. In one case there are, I believe, 300.

Military Weapons—The Sword.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlet, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government have yet decided to dispense with the use of swords for active service in the field; and, if so, will he state by what weapon they will be supplanted.

MR. ARNOLD-FOSTER: No, Sir. The cavalry retain their swords. Swords, however, have been withdrawn from the artillery.

Somaliland Operations.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the total number of troops now employed in Somaliland; and what is their monthly cost.

MR. ARNOLD FORSTER: The troops employed in Somaliland amount to 1,336 British and 7,026 native, or 8,362 in all. The monthly cost of the operations may be taken at £115,000.

Sales of Military Stores.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give the House any estimate of the cost price of the various items which form the excess appropriations in aid of Votes, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the Army Estimates, the proceeds of which realised £3,230,000.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am afraid that it is not possible to give this information. An enormous quantity of surplus animals and stores of every description and in various conditions had to be disposed of at the end of the war in South Africa. Large quantities were sold to the Civil Governments of the new Colonies, and the balance was disposed of locally on the best terms possible. But the proportion which the amounts realised bore to the original cost price could not be estimated.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): And large quantities of stores were also publicly burnt.

Village Councils in India.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to an appeal made to the Viceroy by Mr. Malabari, editor of *East and West*, to reconstitute village councils in India, and to the reply given by Lord Curzon; and whether he will give support to a scheme for increasing the usefulness of these village councils.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I am not acquainted with the Paper referred to, and have no doubt that the Government of India will give careful consideration to any scheme of the nature indicated that may be laid before them.

Aden Boundary Commission.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state the cost up to the present date of the Aden Boundary Commission, including the cost for troops; what is the number and composition of the troops employed in the protectorate of Aden; and what has been the total loss of life since the delimitation began.

MR. BRODRICK: The normal garrison of Aden is about 2,400 men. The total number of troops in the Aden Protectorate on the 1st January last were:—2,077 British officers and men; 1,891 native ditto. Of these the troops employed at the present moment, in connection with the demarcation, are:—1,018 British infantry, 1,038 native infantry, 90 native cavalry, 461 native sappers, with six guns of British mule battery and six guns of native camel battery. The casualties reported since the commencement of the delimitation have been:—Killed: Non-commissioned officers and men—four British, seven native, and one native surveyor. Wounded—Officers: Two British, one native; Non-commissioned officers and men: Seventeen British, fourteen native. I have not yet received full accounts of the expenditure.

India—Official Secrets Amendment Bill.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state the nature of the modifications proposed by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General in the Official

Secrets Amendment Bill; and whether he can now give the House an assurance that the Bill will be confined to naval and military matters, and that the modifications referred to will provide for the retention in the Bill of those clauses in the original Act of 1889 which define the conditions under which a prosecution can be instituted and which place the onus of proving guilty intention upon the prosecution.

MR. BRODRICK: I have not received the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill, and do not know whether they have reported or what modifications they have proposed in it.

The Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will delay his final assent to the Transvaal Labour Ordinance (Introduction of Asiatics) until he has drawn up, placed upon the Table of the House, and given the House an opportunity of discussing the regulations which are to govern Clause 33 of the Ordinance dealing with the question of the wives and children of the indentured labourers.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I am not prepared to give the pledge asked for.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government have now sanctioned the Transvaal Ordinance respecting Chinese labour, whether the regulations connected therewith have been framed; and whether he will now lay upon the Table a copy of these documents.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The answer to all these Questions is, No.

Workmen's Compensation in the Transvaal.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will put into force in the Transvaal the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1897.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The matter is not one in which I am prepared to take any action without consulting the Governor, whose attention shall be drawn to the matter.

MR. BAYLEY: I will put another Question on this later on.

Transport of Chinese Labourers' Families.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the importer will in each case pay for the cost of transit of wives and families of Chinese labourers to South Africa indentured under the Ordinance; and, if not, who will bear the cost.

*MR. LYTTELTON: It is proposed to stipulate that the importer will pay.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say who will pay the cost of repatriation of Chinese labourers and their wives and families in cases where the indenture has been completed, and in cases where the labourer seeks to return to China before completing the terms of the indenture.

*MR. LYTTELTON: It is proposed that the importer should pay in the case of completed indentures. In that of incomplete indentures the question of the cost of return passages will be taken into account in computing the amount the labourer has to pay for his breach of contract.

The Chinese Minister's Suggestions on the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the conference proposed in his letter of 15th February to the Foreign Office for the purpose of incorporating the suggestions of the Chinese Minister in the Ordinance for the importation of Asiatic labourers into the Transvaal has yet been held; if not, whether he can say when it will be held; and whether the Ordinance and the regulations which accompany it will be laid before the House in the form as modified by the conference before final adoption by the Imperial Government.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Conference will be held directly. In answer to the second Question of the hon. Member I am unable to give any undertaking.

Dr. MACNAMARA: As I gather from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman that the Ordinance will probably be adopted before this House has had an opportunity of discussing the details, I will ask permission at the close of Questions to move the adjournment of the House.

Amendment of Regulations.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the regulations which will accompany the Ordinance for the importation of Chinese labourers into the Transvaal may be varied without reference to the Imperial Government.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: Any amendments of the regulations will be communicated to me, and Lord Milner will be instructed that no important amendment should be made without previous communication with the Secretary of State.

Boer Protest Against Chinese Labour.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any evidence that General Botha and the other Boer leaders who have protested, in the name of the Boers in the Transvaal, against the importation of indentured Chinese to work in the mines, were actuated by unworthy motives; whether, if so, he will lay that evidence upon the Table of the House; and whether he has replied to the protest of General Botha and the other Boer leaders.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: I would refer the hon Member to the reply to the letter of the Boer leaders published at page 22 of Cd. 1899 on Monday last and to my statement in debate in the House of Commons on Tuesday last.†

Missionary Enterprise among the Chinese Labourers.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any attempts to convert the Chinese in the Transvaal, whilst shut up in the compounds attached to the mines, will be prohibited unless with their assent; and whether the same facilities to approach them, if any are given, will be granted to the clergy of all religions and of all religious sects.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: I think I may safely undertake on behalf of the Transvaal Government to answer both Questions in the affirmative.

Cost of Cabling Transvaal Documents.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the telegram sent to him by Lord Milner, in regard to an offer from a Boer to contest with General Botha the Chinese issue in the Transvaal in any district, was paid for out of either the money of the taxpayer in this country or of the taxpayer in the Transvaal, and if so, which; whether, if paid for out of public moneys, General Botha and the other Boer leaders who are opposed to the introduction of Chinese labour will be afforded the same financial facilities to transmit to him their views on questions before Parliament; and whether he has replied to the protest of the Boer leaders, and, if so, will he lay that reply upon the Table of the House.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: The letter from Mr. Van Rensburg referred to was, as I understand, telegraphed at the expense of the Transvaal Government just as was the letter from the Boer leaders published with my reply in Cd. 1899. It must be left to Lord Milner to judge what documents are of sufficient importance to justify him in transmitting them to the Secretary of State for his information.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has noticed that the last Paper circulated from the Transvaal contained ten pages of extracts from nine South African newspapers; whether any of this newspaper matter was telegraphed, and, if so, what was the cost of doing so; and whether he will consider the desirability of directing that Colonial Governors should not swell their despatches by the inclusion of such extracts from the Press.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1543.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The newspaper matter in question was not telegraphed. I am not prepared to give any such general direction as is suggested.

Chinese Labour Recruiting at Tientsin.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Colonial Secretary a Question of which I have given private notice—namely, whether Mr. Perry and Mr. J. G. Hamilton were on Saturday last, on behalf of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, recruiting labour in Tientsin; whether the Ordinance has yet received the Royal Assent; and whether the right hon. Gentleman will order the recruiting to be stopped until the Ordinance and regulations in their complete operative form are before Parliament.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The hon. Member's Question was only handed in about five minutes ago, and then not in the form in which he now puts it. I am afraid I cannot give a complete answer, but I will answer so far as I can. I shall be greatly obliged if hon. Members interested in South Africa who wish for answers to Questions will be good enough to give me somewhat longer notice, as the telegraph communication with South Africa which is necessitated by Questions has been rendered rather difficult. With regard to the Question now put, I did see a paragraph to that effect in a morning paper, and I think it follows that if those gentlemen are now in China they must have gone there before the Labour Ordinance has been passed. The pledges which I gave on behalf of the Government in this House with regard to the appointment of a person responsible to the Government in China in order fully to explain any contract which Chinamen might enter into in China will be strictly adhered to, and manifestly until that gentleman is appointed no complete contract can possibly be made.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Is this person to be all over China or in some particular place?

*MR. LYTTELTON: He is to be in that place in which it is desirable he should be.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Has any definite settlement of this matter been come to with the Chinese Government?

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir. I think hon. Members are in possession of certain requisitions made by the Chinese Government. We hold a conference, either to-morrow or the next day, with the Chinese Ambassador on the subject, and all expedition will be given to these matters, and no difficulty is expected.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Who is to interpret to the recruits in China—is it to be an Englishman understanding the Chinese language, or is the position of interpreter to be handed over to a Chinese mandarin?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The details are not arranged at the present time. I think the hon. Member may rely upon us to secure that sufficient precautions shall be taken to ensure that the contract is fully understood by the men.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Is it you or Lord Milner?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am responsible for the pledge I gave to this House.

MR. LOUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman stop recruiting till he can put these regulations into force?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Are we to understand that the details of this arrangement are left to the discretion of Lord Milner?

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir, you may not understand that.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Well, I will understand it.

Payment of South African War Debts.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): On behalf of the hon. Member for Hawick Burghs I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the dissatisfaction in the new African Colonies owing to the failure of the authorities to honour the military receipts for goods and stock supplied during the war; and whether he can facilitate the disposal of claims with despatch, or authorise interim payments in cases of severe distress.

*MR. LYTTELTON: A certain number of complaints have been brought to my notice, but in view of the complexity of the work I am not prepared to say that there has been undue delay. I am making inquiry as to the progress of the work.

SIR JOHN LENG: On behalf of the hon. Member for Hawick Burghs I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the action of the authorities of the Orange River Colony in reference to the treatment of a claim by A. J. Griessel, Bloemfontein, for the honouring of military receipts granted during the late war and dated in May and November, 1901; and whether, seeing that the authorities at first denied the existence of the receipts, then admitted the same but refused payment on the ground that two sons of the claimant had rejoined the enemy, and finally, on it being explained that the claimant aged thirty-four had no sons but only a daughter aged four years, promised further consideration, he will state what consideration has been given; and whether, in view of the claimant's circumstances, he can arrange that payment of this claim shall be made.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have no information with regard to this claim but will make inquiry.

Transvaal—Taxation of Natives.

The MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Government has considered the possibility of reverting to and amplifying the practice of the late Boer Government of remitting or reducing the hut tax in the Transvaal, in proportion to the amount of work done by the natives during the year, such work being proved on production of certificates from their employers, and thus affording them an inducement, by way of extra remuneration, to further the agricultural and industrial development of the country.

*MR. LYTTELTON: This matter is receiving my attention in connection with the evidence given by Boer witnesses before the Labour Commission.

Transvaal Magistracy.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay a Return upon the Table, giving the names, ages, salaries, and previous careers and experience of the persons who have been appointed to the position of magistrate in the Transvaal; who is responsible for such appointments, and are any qualifications required from applicants for the post; and, in that case, what are they.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I will obtain the information required from the Governor by whom the appointments are made and will lay it.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House any idea when the information will be ready?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am afraid not.

Fiscal Policy—Colonial Preference.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has communicated to the Colonial Governments the intimation that it is now no part of the policy of His Majesty's Government to extend preferential treatment to the Colonies.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): Have you communicated with the Colonial Governments on the question of Chinese labour?

[No answer was returned.]

Land Grants in East Africa.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the names of the persons to whom a grant of 500 square miles of land has recently been assigned in East Africa; what consideration the Government has received on account thereof; if Government officials in East

Africa have made any report on the advisibility of such grants; and, if so, will he lay them upon the Table of the House; will he state also what consideration has been given to native rights, and if suitable reserves will be secured out of this grant for the natives; and if any other similar offers or grants of land are now proposed to be made to syndicates.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): A lease of 500 square miles of land, on terms approved by His Majesty's Treasury, is now being arranged with the East Africa Syndicate. The selection of the area was made last year by the local representative of the syndicate in consultation with His Majesty's Commissioner. The lease will be subject to the provisions of the East Africa Crown Lands Ordinance, 1902, which is in the library of the House, and under which the rights of natives are fully reserved. Negotiations are also in progress for the lease of certain forest lands in the vicinity of the coast to firms interested in the production and working of timber and rubber.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): Do these grants of land carry with them rights of government by the syndicate?

*Earl PERCY was understood to reply in the negative.

Brussels Sugar Comvention.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the British representatives, at a meeting of the Commission appointed under the Brussels Sugar Convention held during the Parliamentary recess on behalf of the exporters of confectionery and preserves in this country, brought forward the claim that the limitations of the surtax should apply to their manufactures, he will state what decision was arrived at; and whether any Report of the Proceedings will be laid on the Table of the House.

*Earl PERCY: At the meeting of the Commission in October last the majority of the Commissioners were of opinion that the limitation of surtax under Article 3 of the Convention applied only to sugar itself, whether raw or refined, and not to sugared products. As, however, the general bearing of the Convention upon the treatment of such products remains in doubt, His Majesty's Government are of opinion that the course most conducive to the public interest will be to defer the laying of any further Papers on the subject until after the termination of the next session of the Commission, which will open on the 10th of March next.

Mr. LOUGH: Are we not entitled, under the terms of the Convention, to have a Report of the Proceedings? Will the Government let us know what was the nature of the decision, and give us some account, at least, of the arguments?

*Earl PERCY: I do not know what the hon. Member means by "nature of the decision."

Mr. LOUGH: By what majority was it come to?

*Earl PERCY: I have said the Government think it would not be in the public interest to lay any further Papers at present.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is there not a right of appeal in certain cases, and will the Government consider the propriety of calling a Conference for that purpose?

*Earl PERCY: The whole question is under negotiation, and the question of appeal has not arisen.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: But will it be considered?

[No answer was returned.]

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any further negotiations have taken place between the Commission set up under the Brussels Sugar Convention and the Russian Government with regard to the treatment of sugar made in Russia, by the signatory Powers, and whether the Government can see its way to cancel the prohibition of the import of sugar from Russia into this country.

*EARL PERCY: The answer to both Questions is in the negative.

The Japanese and Wei-hai-Wei.

MR. PLUMMER (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given private notice — namely whether his attention has been drawn to the report of the presence of Japanese battleships at Wei-hai-Wei previous to the attack on Port Arthur, and, if so, whether he is in a position to contradict the report.

*EARL PERCY: We have been informed by the Commander-in-Chief in Chinese waters that the Japanese men-of-war on their way to Port Arthur were not even sighted at Wei-hai-Wei, and no Japanese ships of war have visited that port since August, when two vessels went there on a complimentary visit for a few hours.

London County Council—Contracts with Foreign Firms.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the number and value of contracts for rails and railway material placed by the London County Council with foreign makers during the last five years, and what percentage of these contracts were secured by German firms.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Particulars of this nature do not, in the ordinary course, come to the knowledge of the Board of Trade. I have, however, been supplied with a statement on behalf of the London County Council, which I will read to the House. "The total value of all contracts let by the London County Council for tramway works is about £2,000,000, of that amount £150,000, or 7½ per cent., represents foreign work. The Council began by restricting the tenders for this work to British firms, but owing to the limited number of tenders and the high prices, it then adopted open competition, and, as the result, all materials are now being obtained in this country and at much lower prices. Altogether the Council estimates that it has saved, in rails alone, about £40,000 by its policy of open competition. No contracts have been sent to Germany."

Post Office and the Cash-on-Delivery System.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the dissatisfaction expressed in many quarters with the introduction of the cash-on-delivery system by the postal authorities; and whether, having regard thereto, he will withhold his sanction from the proposed system.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Representations have been made to me expressing dissatisfaction with the prospect of the introduction of a system of cash on delivery; and I have received others in support of such an arrangement. I have the question under consideration, and am collecting evidence as to the working of the system in the countries in which it is already established and its probable effect if instituted in the United Kingdom. I have as yet come to no decision on the scheme; and I do not propose to sanction its introduction unless, and until, I am satisfied that such a course would be for the benefit of the community in general.

MR. BAYLEY: Will the noble Lord take the opinion of the House before he sanctions the experiment?

LORD STANLEY: I certainly shall not introduce the system before the Estimates are introduced.

Railway Rates on Agricultural Produce.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any arrangements have now been arrived at between the Board and the railway companies whereby consignors of agricultural produce within the United Kingdom, either individually or in combination, may be enabled to secure for themselves better terms and facilities for the carriage of their goods.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The conference between my noble friend and the general managers of the railway companies, of which the hon. Member is already aware, was followed up by a circular letter in which the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries asked for the companies' observations upon certain suggestions and difficulties which had presented themselves. The reply to this letter has only recently been received, and my noble friend proposes that this correspondence shall shortly be presented to both Houses of Parliament. Several companies already offer facilities for the aggregation of consignments of farm produce whereby lower rates may be obtained by the consignors of the individual lots included, and it is to be hoped that the ventilation of the subject resulting from the friendly discussion between the Board and the companies may lead to an extension of these facilities.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the noble Lord communicate with his colleagues in the Cabinet who are railway directors?

[No answer was returned.]

Income-tax Collection in Scotland.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh, I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that notices have been issued in Scotland demanding payment of income-tax within seven days, failing which the amount will be recovered by a sheriff's officer, with costs; and whether he will say if similar notices have been issued all over England, and whether recovery will be made by warrant on the expiry of the seven days in England with costs.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The instructions to collectors of income-tax, which are practically identical for England and Scotland, require that if the tax be not paid by the second week in February, steps should be taken for enforcing payment by legal process—and no doubt, therefore, notices in the sense named in the Question have been issued by this time both in England and Scotland. But, whether in England or in Scotland, action on the notice would not be taken in the case of a person who can show reasonable cause for further delay, and who can promise payment at a fixed date within the next few weeks. There must, however, be some excuse for non-payment which the collecting authorities can properly accept, and in the absence thereof recovery would be made, with costs, on expiry of the seven days notice, both in England and in Scotland.

Whisky Adulteration.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will appoint a Committee of analytical experts to fix a legal standard in the case of whisky, such as is done in other articles of consumption, in order to protect the public against spurious substitutions.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The Board of Inland Revenue do not think that it would be of any practical use to attempt to fix a legal standard for whisky. There is already a minimum legal standard of strength below which whisky may not be sold without notice, and other conditions must necessarily vary widely according to the taste of consumers.

Grants to Welsh Colleges.

MR. GEORGE KENYON (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will include the three Welsh Colleges, which are hindered in their work by lack of funds, in the list of University Colleges to receive increased grants during the current year; and on what principle these grants will be allocated.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The grants to the Welsh Colleges have been based on a different principle from that applicable to the English Colleges and on a more liberal scale. I will consider the matter further; but at present I think that it will not be possible to increase the Welsh grants.

West Clare Railway Works.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a disturbance near Doonbeg, county Clare, on the 11th inst., in reference to some work on the West Clare Railway line; and, seeing that a force of police was present on the occasion, whether he can state the circumstances which gave rise to the disturbance, and in what way the police were employed in reference to the matter and by whose orders.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Owing to the flooding of the railway line near Doonbeg, which endangered the public safety, a number of workmen in the employment of the railway company were sent to cut a drain for the purpose of carrying away the water. The farmers objected to the surplus waters being conveyed to their lands adjoining the line, and showed their resentment by assembling with pitchforks, sticks, and stones. Acting under the orders of their superior officers a force of police was present to preserve the peace.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Are the railway company exercising a legal right in this work? What remedy have those who will be flooded in consequence of it?

MR. WYNDHAM: I can hardly be expected to express an opinion on the legal merits of the question. Those who are injured have a remedy at law.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: As this affair has caused some excitement and disturbance may I ask whether it is usual to supply a large force of police to enable work to be carried out before it has been decided whether those doing it have a legal right.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That is a general argument.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: But were the authorities satisfied that in giving the assistance of the police they were enabling legal work to be carried on?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am quite satisfied that it was the duty of the Executive Government to send the police in view of the hostile attitude of the people. Whether the railway company have a legal right can be determined by process of law.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): By whom were the police sent?

MR. WYNDHAM: By their superior officer.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I shall call attention to this again.

Arterial Drainage in Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed during the present session to take any steps to give effect to the Unionist policy propounded in 1887 in regard to the arterial drainage of Ireland, and if anything will be done by Estimate or otherwise to provide funds for dealing with the flooding of the River Bann.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not in a position to take up the general question of arterial drainage. I do intend to submit certain proposals in respect of the River Bann.

MR. DELANY: Did not the Unionst policy refer to the Barrow and not to the Bann.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It referred to the whole country.

Labourers (Ireland) Bill.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will immediately introduce the promised measure dealing with labourers in Ireland so as to afford ample time for the consideration of its provisions by those specially interested in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: I shall endeavour to introduce this Bill at the earliest date consistent with the demands on the time of the House for concluding the financial business of the year.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman not give us more definite information? It is of the utmost importance that we should have the terms of the Bill in our hands at the earliest possible moment.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have said that I shall introduce the Bill at the earliest possible moment, but in the absence of the Prime Minister it is quite impossible for me to arrange the business of the House.

County Clare Police Occupations.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that members of the Royal Irish Constabulary have been employed in conveying cattle to, and herding cattle on a farm near Glanquin, county Clare; and will he say whether the employment of police in this manner has been sanctioned by the authorities.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has not been correctly informed. There is no foundation for the suggestion in the Question.

Extra Police at Cappawhite.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many extra police are stationed in Cappawhite district, county Tipperary, and for what reason; whether he will say for what official use a special transport car provided at Cappawhite is employed, and whether the head constable has authority to use it for his private business; and whether he is aware that this official recently used it to take him on a canvassing tour with reference to an expected vacancy in the clerkship of petty sessions.

MR. WYNDHAM: The police force in this district was augmented in 1902, but the necessity for the additional men having passed away they were withdrawn some time ago. The transport car is still required for patrolling purposes. It has never been used by the head constable except when engaged on duty. The reply to the concluding inquiry is in the negative.

Irish Under-Sheriffs.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to introduce this session any Government measure to make under-sheriffs in Ireland permanent officials under the Crown, and to provide them with a staff of competent assistants; and, if not, whether the Government will afford facilities for a Bill of that character if introduced by a private Member.

MR. WYNDHAM: Legislation with the object stated would entail a considerable expenditure of public money, and I cannot hold out any hope that the Government will undertake such legislation in the present session. The question of affording facilities for a private Member's Bill is one that should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

Irish Labourers and Land Purchase.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say what steps have been taken by the Land Commission in reference to inquiries as to whether accommodation for labourers is needed on any estates for the purchase of which applications have been made to them for advances under the Irish Land Act, 1903; on how many estates have such inquiries been made up to the 1st instant; in how many cases has a scheme been framed under Section 96; and whether a copy of the Report of the Land Commission in reference to such accommodation on any estate can be obtained on application.

MR. WYNDHAM: The inspectors are instructed to make the inquiries contemplated by Section 96. Such inquiries have been made to the present date in the case of fifty-three estates. On one estate the accommodation for labourers is reported to be insufficient, but no scheme has yet been framed by the Estates Commissioners. It would be contrary to established practice to publish these Reports, which, being departmental, are regarded as confidential; but I am considering whether the results of the investigations can be published in a summarised form.

Irish Catholic University.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the promise made by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer to ask Parliament in this session to double the grant to University colleges in England in receipt of Parliamentary grants, he is prepared to submit to Parliament a proposal to establish in Ireland a University acceptable to the majority of the people of that country, and to which grants by Parliament could be given.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I cannot at the present moment usefully supplement my recent statement in this House on the subject of Irish University education.

Rent Dispute on the Erne Estate.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of Margaret Dolan *v.* the Earl of Erne, heard before the County Court Judge at Enniskillen on Thursday the 28th ult., when the judge strongly commented upon the action of the landlord in consequence of the tenant having a fair rent fixed by the Land Court; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action to prevent such actions being brought.

Mr. WYNDHAM: My attention has been directed by the Question to a newspaper report of the proceedings. I am unable to say whether it is accurate. The landlord was within his right in suing for a year's rent which the tenant admitted to be due. The Judge gave a decree, on her consent, payable in two instalments.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Did not the Judge comment severely on the action of the landlord?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have seen the newspaper report which states so. It is not for me to say whether the statement is accurate.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL: The report is absolutely correct.

*Mr. DELANY: Did not a similar case occur in King's County and the County Court Judge refuse to give costs?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Irish Language in Irish Schools.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why, in the recent regulations issued by the National Board, steps were taken to prevent the teaching of Irish in primary schools as an extra subject.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am informed by the Commissioners that they have recently issued revised programmes in extra subjects, including the Irish language, which it is proposed to bring into operation on the 1st April, 1904. If, however, managers of National Schools are not satisfied with these programmes they are at liberty to submit alternative programmes for the approval of the Commissioners. The programmes and regulations were not issued with the intention of preventing the teaching of extra subjects, but, on the contrary, to make instruction in these subjects more efficient.

Irish Land Purchase—Public Trustee.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what are the position and duties of the Public Trustee under the Land Purchase Act; in what way are moneys realised by sale of lands and invested in his name secured for the beneficiaries; are the Government responsible for his integrity; is his sanction required in case trustees themselves desire to invest the proceeds of sale where the vendor is tenant for life; and whether in cases in which he acts as trustee of the purchase money can he invest the proceeds without the approval of the vendor.

Mr. WYNDHAM: If the hon. Member will refer to the 52nd Section of the Irish Land Act he will find most of his Questions answered. Rules are being framed which, when approved of, will answer the others. These rules will be published when finally settled.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: What were the previous qualifications of this Public Trustee?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have answered that before. He had had extensive experience as a land agent.

Tredennick Estate.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution of a meeting of the Killaghter Branch of the United Irish League, held on 10th February, over which the Rev. P. B. Dunlany presided, urging, that inasmuch as the Congested Districts Board have had in their possession for the past three years two grass farms of about 280 acres on the Tredennick Estate, St. Colin's Point, that the Board should immediately take steps to divide these farms into suitable holdings for the fishermen of St. Colin's Point, who have now no land, and to build houses for them at reasonable purchase prices, and deprecating the use of those farms for grazing purposes; and, if so, will he say what steps, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The lands referred to in the Question will be rearranged and sold with the least possible delay.

Cork Post Office Telegraph Learners.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why two female learners, who entered the Cork Post Office in September, 1898, who have qualified in every respect, and have been employed as acting telegraphists for the past four years, are now classified and paid as learners; and why, seeing that these girls had risen from an initial wage of 5s. per week in 1898, to 16s. 6d. in 1904, this amount has been reduced to 10s. per week since 18th January, 1904.

Lord STANLEY: In consequence of a falling-off in telegraph work at Cork, it was found necessary to discontinue the full time duty of these two learners, but it has now been found possible again to give them full time duties.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House in order to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the action of the Government in promulgating an Ordinance providing for the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal before the Ordinance and its regulations have been discussed by the House of Commons in their complete and operative form.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Had it been a question of the Ordinance alone, I should have had some difficulty in accepting the Motion after the recent debate; but I understand there are some regulations which are still under consideration. I think it would be impossible to separate the consideration of the Ordinance and the regulations, and, therefore, I will ask the leave of the House.

Dr. Macnamara rose in his place and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The promulgation of the Ordinance providing for the introduction of Indentured Chinese Labour into the Transvaal before the Ordinance and its regulations have been discussed by the House of Commons in their complete and operative form;" but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen:—The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting this day.

NEW BILLS.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES (No. 2) BILL.

"To legalise the peaceful conduct of Trade Disputes and to alter the Law affecting the liability of Trade Union funds," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Keir Hardie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 91.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES, ETC., BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, to amend the Law of Rating, and to establish Fair Rent Courts," presented by Mr. Nannetti; supported by Mr. Harwood, Mr. Field, Captain Norton, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Bell, Mr. Crooks, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Joyce, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Jacoby, and Mr. Logan; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 92.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO BILL.

"To enable localities by a direct vote to prevent the issue of Licences for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors," presented by Mr. Whittaker; supported by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. Burt, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. Rigg; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 93.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz:—

	£
Vote 1. Pay, &c., of the Army	2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts	2,100,000
Vote 7, Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies . . .	2,030,000
Total . . .	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) .	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): On a point of order, would it not be possible to take each item separately? Say that for Somaliland?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can move to reduce the Vote so far as the Somaliland expenditure is concerned, but it is not the practice to put these items separately.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.) hoped he was not creating a very bad precedent in asking leave to address the Committee at that stage, but there were circumstances connected with the Vote which made it desirable for him to say a few words in explanation. The figure was a large one, amounting to £2,700,000, its character was composite, and it was practically a sweeping up of all outstanding accounts of the late war, supplemented by certain items which had no connection with the war. The Vote on account of the war related to transactions most of which took place many months ago—in fact, some years ago—and a great many of the incidents out of which the Votes arose had been discussed over and over again in Parliament. Although the amount of this Supplementary Estimate was large, he did not think any reflection could be cast on the Accountant-General of the Army in consequence of it. He could not give the exact figures of the actual expenditure beginning 1899, but he found in 1899–1900 there was an under-expenditure of £500,000 on a Vote of £43,000,000. The following year on an expenditure of £91,000,000 there was an under-expenditure of £600,000; in the next year on a Vote of £92,000,000, the under-expenditure was £254,000; and in the last year on a Vote of £69,000,000, there was an under-expenditure of £446,000. It would, he thought, be admitted, considering the circumstances under which the sums were voted, that this was not a discreditable record for the finance department of the War Office, and that it gave no ground for sneering at that office.

He did not propose to discuss the details, but he felt it was due to the Committee to explain why these accounts which, in most cases, referred to transactions which were closed two years ago, came in now. There was a large sum in the Estimate which represented payments to be made on account of the colonial contingents. These accounts had to go through the process of being confirmed in South Africa, and that was the reason why they were now brought for the first time before the House. The final Yeomanry charges had been delayed on the same ground. There had been many matters which it had been absolutely impossible to put into the account without careful investigation of the correctness of the claims put forward. Under the head of Gratuities there was a payment of £100,000 to the South African Constabulary. It was not originally contemplated to make this payment; but it was decided, in view of the fact that the services of the Constabulary were practically as much military as those of other troops in South Africa, to give the gratuity to them. There was also a small Vote for the Army Service Corps, rendered necessary by the retention of the services of a considerable number of natives, who had been engaged by the Army Service Corps in removing the great accumulation of stores, and by the provision of the necessary storehouses required to prevent deterioration of the materials. The railway charge had been referred to by his right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton. The railways of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies were taken over by the military during the war, and on the conclusion of the war a claim was made by the War Office against the Colonial Governments for the work and labour that had been done, and the expenditure that had been incurred for the maintenance of these railways. This claim was not admitted in the first instance by the Colonial Governments, but there was no doubt that it was a valid one. They had not yet, however, been able to obtain payment from the two Colonies, and therefore it was necessary to write off the sum which appeared in the Estimates, though he hoped he was not too sanguine in anticipating that this amount might, at an early day, appear on the other side of the account. Then there was a Vote for land and inland water transport, which was practically due to the large number of troops kept in South Africa since the conclusion of the war, as well as a Vote for sea transport, which was due to the bringing back of more troops than was originally contemplated. The amount for provisions and allowances was attributable to the continuance of the very high cost of provisions in South Africa, and the necessity of retaining special allowances, which alone could enable the officers and men to face the conditions under which they were living. The cost of forage was also very high, and the amount under this head was made greater by reason of the large number of horses left in the country in excess of the ordinary stock, and until those horses were disposed of it was necessary to provide forage, at very high cost, for their sustenance.

The other principal branch of the Vote was the expenditure which had been incurred in respect of Somaliland. He did not propose to discuss on this Estimate the question of the policy in Somaliland. The Leader of the Opposition, he thought, the other day rather misrepresented what was going on in that country when he suggested that the war which we were compelled to carry on was an aggressive war, made with the object of taking the territory of somebody else. There had been three incursions into territory under British protection, and on every one of those occasions we had had in self-defence, and in defence of those to whom our word was pledged, to take up arms. This was the third occasion on which we had had to resist the incursion of this enemy; and he honestly believed, however unpalatable it might be to us, that we should be compelled to carry on this unprofitable and unsatisfactory conflict. This was one of those campaigns which any Party sitting on his side of the House would be compelled to undertake and carry through. He was sure the Government took no pride in it and did not rejoice in it; but as long as our Empire was what it was, and as long as our responsibilities were as great as they were, occasions must arise when wars of this kind would have to be undertaken. He did not like to be too sanguine, but he did not think he was overstating the purport of the information at the disposal of the Government when he said that the operations were now in a more satisfactory position than they had been for many months past. Though he was very far from desiring to make any prophecy, he thought they were within reasonable distance of a development of this campaign which would make it much easier for them to bring it to a conclusion. So long as the enemy was within our territory, as he was now, so long as he was under arms, and so long as the Government were certain, as they now were, that if they left him alone the movement would recrudesce and that they would be rewarded for their moderation by being compelled to make further military efforts, he thought they had no option but to continue the campaign until it was brought to a successful conclusion.

There was also on the Estimates a small item for the China Expeditionary Force. It was perhaps strange that this item should appear on the accounts now; but the Indian Government undertook a large amount of work in connection with the expedition, and they had only now rendered the accounts—hence the delay.

An item for increased pay and messing allowance required explanation. The reason of it was this, viz.: At the close of the war the establishments of two branches of the Army were largely in excess of the normal establishment. At the beginning of that year an estimate was made that there would be a large reduction of the establishment of the Army during that year. That anticipation had been realised. The numbers had come down to almost the precise figure that was anticipated, but they had not come down in exactly the way anticipated. The result was that they had, in addition to the extra troops in Somaliland, which accounted for a portion of the extra sum, an excess in the two most expensive branches of the service, viz., the artillery and cavalry, while they had a deficit, he was sorry to say, in respect of the infantry. It was not possible to forecast with exactitude what number of men would go out of every branch of the service during the year. It had been within the power of many men in these two branches to go into the reserve: but as a matter of fact, contrary to anticipations, they had chosen to remain in these two branches of the service. Hence it was that the Government had to ask for this additional sum for pay for messing allowances during the year. These were not matters with which he was very familiar, but he had thought it might ease the situation and render the discussion more profitable if he made these explanations on points which had struck him on first examining the Votes.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) thought no apology was needed from the right hon. Gentleman for explanations which only anticipated inquiries which obviously must be made. They were now led to believe that they were emerging from the penumbra of the South African war. It was time that this should be so, and the Committee would be relieved to have this assurance. With regard to the new sub-head B.B. to Vote 6, "Expenditure in connection with Imperial military railways, £900,000," he wished to know whether it was not within the cognisance of the War Office at the time of the ordinary Estimates. When new items of large amount were introduced into the Supplementary Estimates or a small amount in the original Estimate was swollen into a large amount by these Estimates they began to wonder whether, human nature being what it was, there was not a little temptation to produce a somewhat more favourable Budget than circumstances really justified, by postponing till the Supplementary Estimates expenditure which might very well have been anticipated. Even the appearance of such a procedure was to be avoided, but certainly some of these items had that appearance. The same observations were applicable to sub-head M.M. in Vote 7, "Compensation claims in South Africa, £600,000." Why was this not provided for in the original Estimate? If not, why not? The loose and summary figures used in these Supplementary Estimates roused, he would not say suspicion, but a little of that surprise which the right hon. Gentleman appeared to have experienced himself when he had to look into them. For the compensation claims there was the round figure £600,000, for the item B.B., £900,000, and under sub-head E., excess appropriations in aid, in the entry "Proceeds of sale of cast and other animals, £1,000,000," there was no great evidence of exact calculation in these figures. These deductions of excess appropriations in aid had been carried to a length never contemplated when they were first authorised. One of the reasons for the authorisation was that some departments, as, for instance, the Admiralty, were deterred from selling old and superfluous stores because the money would go to the Treasury instead of being retained by the Admiralty; but when they came to deal with large sums like this there was apt to be confusion in the account and an uncertainty as to how far they might not be paper figures, which was much to be deprecated. Another characteristic of these figures was the disproportion between them and the figures in the original Estimate. These disproportions were especially remarkable in the items of pay to the Colonial contingent, Imperial Yeomanry, and gratuities to the troops for active service, for which they were now asked £800,000, £150,000, and £100,000, as compared with £5,000, £10,000, and £3,000 in the original Estimate. In regard to the China payment, it was surely known that that would probably come into account this year, and ought therefore to have been provided for.

Another feature of these Estimates was the discrepancy between the figures and the promises of the Government. He would take the case of Somaliland. He was not going to discuss the merits of the policy; enough was not known of it to enable him to do so. But on 18th June the Secretary of State for War stated—

> "The expenditure up to date on the Somaliland expedition amounts, so far as can be estimated, to about £400,000, as against £500,000 voted in last year's and the present Estimates."

They had therefore about £100,000 in hand then, and now the Committee were asked to vote another £1,600,000. On 20th July the present Postmaster-General said—

> "As regards future operations, we are now in communication with General Egerton, but it would, of course, be impossible to publish the detailed action proposed. Further, it is not possible at present to calculate the possible expenditure, but there is no intention whatever of undertaking enterprises involving fresh expense."

In view of these statements he thought further explanations were required both as to form and as to figures, apart altogether from the merits of the policy.

But more important than the details was the overwhelming expenditure displayed as a whole. The Army expenditure this year amounted to £36,945,000, and it was almost impossible to tell what portion of this was a permanent recurring yearly charge. With regard to these Supplementary Estimates, he had tried to discover what proportion of the expenditure was of a permanent recurring yearly future charge, and what proportion was in payment of something past and done with. He had tried to find out what proportion represented expenditure which would go on year after year. The broad fact was that in 1895 the Army cost £18,000,000, and, keeping out war expenditure, before the present Estimates were presented, the cost was close on £30,000,000, an increase of £12,000,000. The Navy was to cost this year £35,727,000, as against £17,545,000 in 1895, therefore the Army expenditure had gone up 50 per cent. and Naval expenditure 100 per cent., £30,000,000 for both services having been added since the right hon. Gentlemen opposite came into power. When dealing with the first Supplementary Estimates of the year, they were entitled to consider the whole question of expenditure and make a comparison between the total expenditure for those two years. In 1895, the whole national expenditure was £93,918,000, and this year it was £139,199,000, an increase of £45,000,000, or, with Supplementary Estimates, £49,000,000. Within ten years there had been an increase of over 50 per cent., and this quite apart from the sum expended upon the war. There was no sign whatever of diminution, the truth being that an attempt was being made to create in this country a first-class military Power as well as a first-class naval Power, without any clear idea, so far as the country knew, why this should be done. A new council was created, possibly to arrange a rational basis for a wholly irrational departure. The increase would absorb twice over the product of the income-tax in 1895; it would practically swallow up the whole of the estimated receipts of the tax for the present year. That showed the rate at which expenditure was now going on. How much of the estimated taxation of this year would be required to find the sum of £65,000,000, or £66,000,000, which represented the cost of these two services. The income and property tax would not cover half, and the whole of the receipts from Customs, amounting to £34,000,000, would be required to make it up. Taking the 1895 scale of taxation, to which all except tariff reformers would be glad to return, the receipts from income-tax, Customs, Excise, and stamps, would be required to maintain the fighting services. He had already given a comparison between 1895 and this year, and he had stated that there were no signs of diminution. The Government appeared to be unrepentant and unable to take any steps in the direction of economy; these small wars might almost be regarded as part of the normal expenditure of the country, and so they drifted along. But not from want of serious warnings.

Speaking at Bristol, after his resignation in 1902, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol said—

> "They should remember that he had told them that in the last seven years the ordinary expenditure of the country had increased at a rate of no less than 5,500,000 a year. They could not go on in that way. They must stop the rate of increase. If they did not what would happen? He would tell them what would happen. A shilling income-tax would be utterly insufficient for the needs of the country even in time of peace; and all the people who complained now of the little, the small taxation that had been imposed upon sugar and corn, would be face to face with heavy taxation, not only perhaps on those articles, but on other great articles of popular consumption. They would have changed their fiscal system from a system of light taxation which had prevailed during the last forty years, and under which the industries of the country had been enormously developed, to a system of heavy taxation which would keep those industries down."

His resignation, as he told the House last June, was due to the indifference with which his remonstrances were received by his colleagues. Proceeding, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I had protested as Chancellor of the Exchequer for years against that growth of expenditure. I had protested to my colleagues, I had protested to this House; and I had endeavoured to show to the country what I thought were the great dangers to our finance of that growth, because it must never be forgotten that that growth has been far in excess of the automatic growth of our revenue. Well, Sir, my protests and my sermons were received with indifference. But I am thankful to think that there has been a turn in the tide."

Where was the turn in the tide? Then he went on to refer to his successor, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his Budget speech promising a considerable reduction in the Army expenditure in the course of the next year or two. He would now pass on to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon said as Chancellor of the Exchequer—

> "As regards Army expenditure I hope we may be able to make considerable reductions in the next year or two as reorganisation on a normal peace footing becomes complete."

But both these right hon. Gentlemen, admirable preachers and prophets, were now on the Back Benches with none of the little influence they once possessed with the Government. The Secretary of State for War had lately told them that he looked for no reduction in the expenditure, but he said they were getting better value for their money. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer belonged to the school believing in increased taxation on a scientific basis, and believed that taxes were only just beginning their career, and that the revenue they produced under these circumstances would be a mere by-product. That was the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): But the right hon. Gentleman is not reading from my speech.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he was not quoting the right hon. Gentleman's actual words, but what he had stated was the legitimate deduction from his speech. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, Oh!"] There had been efforts on the part of successive Chancellors of the Exchequer to check the growth of expenditure, but the efforts had been unavailing, and the present financial situation demanded the earnest attention of the House. A day should be allotted for consideration of the situation before the House was committed to this expenditure. This was called for by several circumstances. There was the expectation of reduction in expenditure held out a few months ago and not fulfilled; there was the suspension of the £30,000,000 from the Transvaal, which naturally disturbed the financial position of the country; there was the fact that half the taxation imposed for the war had not been removed, nor was it likely to be removed; and the revenue prospects were most unfavourable. He regretted to say that the Government and the House seemed to have lost hold, to a large extent, on expenditure. He urged that the House should assert itself and have a full and searching examination and discussion upon this subject, which was as near to the prosperity, happiness, and future of the country and the Empire as any subject in which the House could be engaged.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it was most desirable that an opportunity should be afforded of discussing what he ventured to think was the most grave and serious financial situation into which this country was gradually drifting.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The general financial situation of the country is not open for discussion on this Vote. That will come up on the Budget. The hon. Member is not entitled to discuss that on the War Office Supplementary Estimates.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he quite recognised that. He was referring to the suggestion which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was allowed to make, and which he presumed it would not be out of order to refer to. He was about to say that he hoped the day would come, because this was not the day, when such a discussion would be in order. The seriousness of the financial situation was by nothing so absolutely proved as by this very Estimate now before the Committee. He thought an Estimate of this sort was absolutely unexampled, and if the Committee would permit him he would show why. This was an Estimate which professed to be for £2,700,000. As a matter of fact it was an Estimate for £9,500,000. The original War Office Estimates for this year were £37,600,000. Now, the Committee were asked to add to this sum £6,100,000. The original appropriations in aid for this year were £3,740,000. The Committee never voted that sum. The Committee could not in any way deal with appropriations in aid. It could neither add to nor diminish them, and for the sufficient reason that it was not the House or the Committee that granted appropriations in aid. It was the Treasury acting under an Act of Parliament. The Committee were now asked to authorise an additional expenditure of £6,100,000, and an additional appropriation in aid of £3,400,000, and he submitted that instead of deducting the one from the other, the one should be added to the other. The first remark he had to make was that this was nothing less than enormous. He reminded the Committee that the original net Vote of last year was £34,250,000. The addition to this of £6,100,000 represented an addition to the expenditure of nearly 20 per cent. on the original Vote. What was the justification of a Supplementary Estimate? There was no justification whatever in ordinary times for any Supplementary Estimate at all. A commonly prudent Government had no Supplementary Estimates. A Supplementary Estimate before this Government came into office was of rare occurrence, and when there was a Supplementary Estimate it was for £100,000 to £200,000. But since 1895 the average had been £2,000,000 to £3,000,000 of Supplementary Estimates. He was prepared to admit that occasions might arise when the Government was unable to foresee with accuracy, or even with a moderate approach to accuracy, the expenditure of the year. New circumstances arose, and these were the only things that justified the Government in coming to the House for an entirely new grant of money. Therefore, whenever a Government came to the House with a Supplementary Estimate, it came as it were with a rope round its neck. It was bound to justify every item of that Estimate, and to show in respect of every item that it consisted of expenditure on matters which could not possibly be foreseen when the original Estimate was presented.

The Secretary of State for War had said that he was taking a course to-day which was inconvenient, but it was one which he thought was convenient, and he thanked him for doing so, and for making a statement at the beginning of the discussion. He followed the right hon. Gentleman's statement throughout, and he was bound to say that in his opinion it entirely failed to show that the circumstances were such that this extra expenditure the Committee were now asked to sanction, could not have been foreseen when the Estimates were presented last year. On the contrary, some of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman tended to show that they could have been foreseen. For instance, he told the Committee that certain items referred to matters which were finally closed two years ago, and that others referred to expenditure which was really incurred four years ago, but had not yet been brought into account. Why were these items brought forward now? Our system was annual. Things were supposed to be cleared up and ended at the close of each year, and, if we were to have this new system introduced, we should have our financial system worked on the plan followed in France where, by the introduction of what was called an "Exercise," accounts were sometimes dealt with ten or eleven years after the date to which they referred. He thought they were approaching that now. It seemed to him that some of the items here were such as must inevitably have been foreseen at the time, and certainly they ought not to have been left so late as this. The last item of the Vote was £600,000 for "South Africa—Compensation Claims." There had been discussion after discussion in this House on that matter, and they had voted sums up to millions for compensation claims. How could the Government say now that this was expenditure of an unexpected nature, and that at no previous portion of the year could it have been foreseen? How that could be contended he could not conceive. The same might be said of almost every item. He was not complaining of the items; they might be quite correct, but he was complaining of their being put before the Committee in a Supplementary Estimate. When the Public Accounts Committee were sitting he remembered asking with respect to several of the matters indicated here. He asked an official from the War Office what was the total amount of such and such an expenditure—referring to expenditure by officers in the field. That official was a very able man indeed, but his reply was "I cannot tell you." He asked "Can you tell me within a million or two?" and the reply was "No, I cannot." That was the state of mind to which the War Office was reduced by South African expenditure. That expenditure was of the most lavish kind. There was practically no sort of Estimate. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the item of £1,000,000 for "Proceeds of sale of cast and other animals, etc." How could £1,000,000 be the wiping out of the whole account? When they wiped out an account they got the pounds, shillings, and pence. There was no finality about £1,000,000. With regard to Appropriations in aid he reminded the Committee that they were in a somewhat different situation. They were made, as he had pointed out, by the Treasury acting under the Public Charges Act, and the House had no control over them. Let the House observe that this Supplementary Estimate represented two huge mistakes—a mistake of £6,100,000 on the original Estimate, and a mistake of £3,400,000 on the Estimates of the Appopriation in aid. Such large mistakes, he fancied, had never been made before. He would not enlarge on that now, although he should object later on to the great vice of Appropriations in aid. They meant the withdrawing of the control of this House from the finances of the country. Last year they amounted to no less than £13,000,000, and this year they would probably amount to still more. He most earnestly begged the attention of the House and the Committee to the growing practice of the Government in making Estimates which were not to be trusted, and of coming in with Supplementary Estimates which were not justifiable and which played a part of a most dangerous character in dealing with Appropriations in aid.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he agreed with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that the Government in laying before the Committee Supplementary Estimates like this were practically presenting a second Army Budget for the year. When the Committee came to go into the discussion of details it would be found, from those enormous sums asked for from the Committee, that the Estimates of the various sub-heads a year ago turned out to be absolutely fallacious. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War in the few remarks with which he had opened the debate did not make any attempt to justify the conduct of the War Office. The right hon. Gentleman made a few observations on several of the large charges, but he did not say why these large charges, which might have been foreseen, had not been entered in round figures in the Estimates for the current year. There was the large figure of £800,000, payments to the Colonial contingents. The War Office must have known that a large sum of that sort was outstanding to the Colonies and that it would probably, and ought to, come in for payment in the current year. Why then was it not put in? With what countenance could the Government justify presenting an Estimate for £5,000 at the beginning of the year and in the month of February bringing in a Supplementary Estimate for £800,000? The right hon. Member the Secretary for War did not attempt to explain how it was that the War Office should be ignorant of the existence of a claim of this magnitude. In the next head the original Estimate was for £10,000, now it was £150,000: and in the third the paltry sum of £3,000 was in the original Estimate, now it was £100,000. Whence came that? Surely the Committee had a right to demand that a department should have a little more foresight as to the amount of the claims that must necessarily come in during the currency of the year. If all this confusion was true in regard to these particular charges, it was still more so in regard to the China charges. The right hon. Gentleman said that this was money that ought to have come in course for payment on 31st March, 1903; therefore it must have been known that it was due. Why, then, was it not in the Estimates? He had doubts that the delay was in the India Office; because he had found that very often it was the War Office that was responsible. The Committee had a right to some excuse or explanation how it came to pass that no sum whatever had been inserted in the earlier Estimates of the year for the £900,000 forImperial Military Railways and £600,000 for South Africa—Compensation Claims? The right hon. Gentleman himself allowed that these had been outstanding sources of quarrel and disagreement between the War Office and the Colonial Office for two years past; and if there was going to be such a vast sum placed on the charges for the current year it should have been in the original Estimate.

This criticism applied with even greater force in regard to the Appropriations in aid. The hon. Member for King's Lynn, who had referred to this subject, did not point out its full gravity. He could quite understand that at the conclusion of a great war, larger sums for Appropriations in aid might be coming in, than on ordinary occasions; and the War Office might fairly come forward with some justification for what took place last year and the year before. The war came to an end in June two years ago and the expectations of the War Office were considerably thrown out of gear. The Appropriations in aid went up from £3,430,000 to £6,130,000, because when the war came to an end the War Office wanted to sell a good deal of their property in South Africa; but certainly that was an enormous discrepancy. In the previous year the Appropriations in aid amounted to £4,500,000, while in the Supplementary Estimates there was an additional sum of £5,500,000 or a total of £10,000,000. The war having come to an end a careful department might have anticipated that a very large sum must come to the credit side of the account, and if that was the case last year, *à fortiori* it should have applied this year, when the war had been finished for more than a year and a half, and when the War Office must have been aware of what they had to sell in the shape of cast horses and other animals, provisions, forage, stores, and materials, but there was as great a discrepancy as in preceding years. Under Vote 6 for the sale of cast horses and other animals the yearly Estimate was £77,000 while the Supplementary Estimate was £100,000, but the discrepancy was even greater in the case of sales of provisions, forage, and supplies. In the Estimates for the year the amount given was £76,800, while in the Supplementary Estimates it was £1,600,000. The discrepancy was not so great on the next item—Stores £650,000 and £500,000; and for Materials £137,000 and £130,000. But putting the four items together the amount in the original Estimates was £941,000 nd the sum now given in the Supplementary Estimates was no less than £3,430,000 or an increase of 350 per cent. Surely they had a right to expect from the head of the War Office some statement to account for the hopeless error into which the War Office had fallen. This matter was important because it would become, under the existing system, almost impossible in future for students to discover the real cost of the war. He thought that it was of the greatest importance that the Public Accounts Committee should devise some alteration of the present practice, in the direction of simplification of the accounts of payments usually put under the heading of Appropriations in aid.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that he did not intend to follow the right hon. Gentleman opposite into the regions of prophecy. He would endeavour to answer the considerable number of Questions that had been put to the best of his ability, and if he did not make himself perfectly clear he hoped hon. Members would be indulgent. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had referred to these Estimates as altogether unexampled, and had suggested that there was something improper in applying Appropriations in aid to meeting deficiencies in the Army Estimates. There was, however, nothing new in the practice, and if the hon. Member thought there was anything improper in it, he was surprised that he did not make the same speech last year. While we were at war it was absolutely impossible to arrive at an exact estimate of the cost of particular services. As to the question of the expenditure upon Imperial military railways, upon which he had been asked a question, he thought he could make the matter quite clear. So far as the War Department was concerned it was only an affair of book-keeping, and no money had passed. These railways had belonged to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies, and had been captured as prizes of war by our Army. During the war they were worked by the military authorities as military railways, and on the conclusion of hostilities they were handed over to the Colonial Government. Their price had been a matter of discussion between the War Department and the Colonial Office, and finally a sum of £1,250,000 had been agreed upon. When he took office that sum was regarded as due to the War Department, but in the last few weeks it had been realised that under the South African War Loan Contribution Act, 1903, all moneys over and above £3,500,000 paid by the new Colonies must go, not to the relief of taxation, but to relief of the National Debt. It therefore became necessary in the Estimate now presented to write off £900,000, £350,000 of the amount having been already charged against the Army Votes in the form of stores supplied from stock. So far as the War Department were concerned, they realised that if, and when, this sum was paid over it would not go to them but would go in relief of the National Debt.

The hon. Member turned to the excess of Appropriations in aid, and said he had been asked what was the meaning of the £1,000,000 shown. He explained that when the transports ceased to be required they contained a large quantity of coal; that receipts from the sale of transport animals in South Africa, other than the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, amounted to £440,000; and that animals and vehicles in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies accounted for £410,000. Altogether there were items amounting to about £1,000,000; but he did not suggest that that would be found to be the precise sum.

MR. LOUGH: Then if we have not to pay it, why should it be in the Estimates?

MR. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT said that it was because they had sold the railway, for which they had paid nothing, to the Colonial Government for £1,250,000.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): Why, if nothing is being paid, should we have a sum on the Estimates of £900,000?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: It is put down to balance our account, to show that we no longer take credit for the sum of £900,000.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT: But that really is no explanation. Because you do not receive a sum which you expected, are you justified in stating that you are going to spend a sum which you do not intend to spend at all?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I am told that it is necessary to show it in this way.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that there would have been an Appropriation in aid to the extent of the £900,000, which would have been in reduction of the amount payable on the Supplementary Votes which they now had to pay. But that amount they now realised would not be paid, and, therefore, the original charge on the Supplementary Votes would not be met by a corresponding Appropriation in aid. In that sense they would have to pay £900,000 more out of the Army Votes.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT: To whom? Who is the money to be paid to.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Might I ask one question? Take the next item, "Cast horses, £1,000,000." The hon. Gentleman takes credit in an Appropriation in aid for cast horses. Now supposing it was found, when that amount was gone into, that that was a mistake and that the amount was only £500,000. Would the hon. Member put the £500,000 down as having been spent on cast horses?

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Are we to understand that the Estimates presented and approved by the House last April are £1,250,000 less than they ought to have been because you expected this amount to come back?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he was sorry he could not answer that Question; he did not look into the matter. He desired to make it quite plain. This sum would not be deducted from the Estimate. He was told that it was necessary to include it for book-keeping purposes. We had paid no money and had received no money. As regarded the Yeomanry accounts, he thought that, in view of the conditions under which the men were recruited, coming as they did from many parts of the world, and receiving different rates of pay, it was rather unreasonable to expect that the accounts should be completely and accurately wound up so soon after the conclusion of the war. As to the China expeditionary force, the Vote comprised money expended to the amount of £400,000. There were, however, surplus Appropriations in aid amounting to £200,000. The old system of conducting a war was by a Vote of credit, and he was not quite sure, from the point of view of this House, whether that was not better. Hon. Members, at all events, then knew the amount for which they were responsible in any year. But it became much more difficult when a war was conducted, not by the War Office but by the India Office. The accounts were made up in China; they were then sent to India to be checked and audited, and were then sent to the War Office, by which they were presented to this House. That might be undesirable but it was in strict accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Committee. The expedition to China was in 1901, and though the delay in getting these accounts, he admitted, was most undesirable, still it was unavoidable. The same would apply to the Somaliland operations which were being conducted by the Indian Government. With regard to the compensations claims, £600,000, that was made up of three amounts, as hon. Members knew, in 1903. The Transvaal and Orange River Colonies agreed to take £3,000,000 in satisfaction of those claims. £1,500,000 was paid by us in 1902 and it was estimated in 1903 that the total amount of these claims amounted to £4,500,000, and the two Colonies agreed to accept £3,000,000 in satisfaction.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) congratulated the hon. Member on his first appearance as a member of the Government supporting the Estimate before the Committee, and said had the hon. Member been more frequent in his attendance before he occupied his present position, when the Estimates were discussed, he would not have imagined that the hon. Member for King's Lynn was making the protest he had made for the first time. It was not the first nor the fifth time that the hon. Gentleman and many others had made the same protest. The hon. Member had been speaking for twenty-five minutes in explanation of the military expenditure on South African railways but he could not even now pretend that he understood what those explanations were. So far as he had been able to gather the original statement contained an item of Appropriation-in-aid of £900,000 which was wrong.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he found that he was mistaken in the statement he had made. He found that the £900,000 was actually spent and that it was now only charged against the Army Vote because it had not been repaid. It was anticipated that it would be repaid and it was admitted by the Colonies that it was due. As a matter of fact £350,000 was repaid, but the remaining £900,000 which was expended could not be repaid, and therefore had to be charged against the Army Vote.

*Sir EDGAR VINCENT: Was it spent on these railways?

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Yes.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was obliged for the explanation but it did not correspond with what he understood the Secretary of State for War to say.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said there was no discrepancy. This amount of £900,000 was taken out of the Army funds as a temporary expenditure, and it was expected that it would be paid back. It was taken, with the sanction of the Treasury, out of the Army Votes for current expenditure, and it was expected that it would be repaid.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said it now appeared that this £900,000 was an advance with the sanction of the Treasury from the Army funds because it was expected that it would be repaid within a year; it was therefore a loan.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Expended by the military on a railway at a time when that railway was being worked by the military.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said this amount was nothing but a loan which was not repaid as they expected it would be. They had had four or five explanations as to this matter but he could not say that he understood any one of them. This question ought to be raised on an Amendment which would bring the question before the Committee in a definite manner, when, perhaps, that Committee would get a proper explanation from the Government. His right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition in his speech had taken the financial ground, which was the only ground which could be taken in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman had shown what the amount would be if these items had been passed, but he omitted to take note of the Military Works Bill.

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is not the occasion upon which to enter into a general review of Army expenditure. Upon Supplementary Estimates the debate must be strictly confined to matters contained in those Estimates.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON remarked that these Estimates so enormously swelled the total naval and military expenditure that he should hesitate before accepting them. Once these and the corresponding Naval Estimates were accepted the gross amount of naval and military expenditure would be nearer £85,000,000 than £75,000,000. A large amount of the extra expenditure related to the unhappy war in South Africa, the true character of which was becoming day by day more visible. The Estimates included a sum of £3,845,000 required for excess expenditure connected with South Africa. Before voting that sum the Committee were entitled to have a definite account of the total cost of the war to this country. Another point on which information was necessary was as to how much of these Estimates was for ancient and how much for current expenditure. It was recently stated that the present cost of the Army in South Africa was about £80,000 a week, but the Committee were entitled now to ask for more precise information. How much was to be the expenditure on military services in South Africa in the year ending 31st March, 1904? He further asked how the additional charge placed on the revenue of the country by these Supplementary Estimates was to be met?

*THE CHAIRMAN: That point cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply at all. The hon. Member must wait for Committee of Ways and Means.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON thought that possibly some preliminary suggestions might be allowed. The Estimates as they stood upset the financial equilibrium of the year, and until he was satisfied that that equilibrium could be restored he would be inclined to withhold his assent to the proposals. With regard to the item for pay to the Colonial Contingents, would the right hon. Gentleman state definitely what were the financial arrangements as to the pay of those contingents during the war, the amount paid to the colonials, both from this country and from the Colonies, and how that pay compared with that of the British soldier.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon) said there could be no doubt as to why the money was required to be voted for the railway. The great bulk of it had been spent on rolling stock.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) explained that of the £1,280,000, £800,000 was spent on new lines or on substantial repairs of the old lines, and £480,000 on rolling stock.

MR. RITCHIE said the question of how the money was spent was not very material, and his recollection was that the bulk of it went in rolling stock, but, of course, the right hon. Gentleman was better informed as to that than he was. The course which had been adopted in bringing the matter before the Committee was perfectly plain and justifiable. In the expectation that it would be repaid by the Colonies the money had been placed to a suspense account. He had his doubts as to whether it would be repaid; he supposed that the Government had their doubts also, and they had therefore acted quite properly in coming to the Committee, stating they were not quite sure about the money being repaid, and asking the Committee to vote it. Even if the money was repaid it would go to the National Debt, so that the Government were acting quite properly, though he was bound to say that the explanations which had been given left much to be desired. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition attributed to him the prophecy that the cost of the Army would be immediately reduced. He had never been so foolish as to make any prophecy of the kind. All he did was to express the feeling entertained by himself and his colleagues that they might look in the near future for a reduction in expenditure. These Supplementary Estimates certainly added very considerably to the cost of the Army for the year, but, in view of the fact that a great deal of the money had been spent so far from home, and that they were engaged in winding up a long and costly war, he thought that if ever a Supplementary Estimate for a large sum was justified it was on this occasion. But when the Secretary of State for War took credit for having brought the war estimates and the expenditure nearly to an equality, he could not help remembering that when responsible for the finances of the country he was led by the then Secretary of State for War to expect, not only that there would be no more expenditure in winding up the war, but that there would be a surrender of several millions. Naturally as Chancellor of the Exchequer he was very pleased to hear that, and he looked forward to being able to present to the House a much more favourable Budget than he ultimately was able to do. Gradually the £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 that were to be surrendered dwindled away; further information brought the sum down to £3,000,000, then to £2,000,000, and finally there was to be a deficit. He did not blame the War Office in this matter, but when credit was taken for the correct estimate of the final cost he could not help saying that that did not agree with his recollection of the circumstances of the case. The War Office naturally had to accept the estimates sent them from South Africa, and those estimates as to the final cost were constantly changing. The conclusion he came to was that the financial control in South Africa left much to be desired. The Government were apparently sensible of the fact, for he noticed in the Press the other day that they were about to send out an Audit Commission to go into the whole question. Going by his own experience, when in office, he had no faith in any estimates of expenditure sent from South Africa, and he would not be in the least surprised if the Secretary of State for War was disappointed with regard to these Estimates winding up the war expenditure.

There was one other item of expenditure which had, he would not say astonished him, but at any rate caused him considerable disappointment. When this expedition in Somaliland was undertaken, it was not contemplated that anything like this amount was likely to arise at all. The original idea was some £300,000 or £400,000, and the Estimates presented to the House were for £500,000, £250,000 one year and £250,000 the next year. Circumstances had occurred which led them to go beyond what was originally contemplated. He attached a great deal of value to precedent in this matter, but cost what it might, no Government could possibly leave that country now without making a clean job of it and fulfilling the task they had undertaken there. It was very unsatisfactory that the amount had been so considerable, and he confessed that he did not think they had seen the end of it yet. He was afraid they would not succeed in locating the Mullah, and if they did they would not catch him. Even if they succeeded in catching him, he believed that another Mullah would arise. He hoped some member of the Government would be able to tell them how soon they expected the operations to be brought to an end.

Mr. BRODRICK said the Secretary of State for War had asked him to say a word in reply to what had fallen from the hon. Member opposite, and from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon in regard to this expenditure. He agreed with what had been said by the hon. Member for King's Lynn about the practice of introducing Supplementary Estimates. When he was at the War Office some years ago, after Lord Randolph Churchill's strong attacks upon the expenditure, a great effort was made and the Supplementary Estimates' system was put for a time entirely on one side, and for two or three years running there were no more Supplementary Estimates, and the principle was only started again in recent years. He thought it would be impossible to compare what had taken place this year with any other year. With regard to what had been said about the operations in Somaliland he would leave it to his right hon. friend to deal with the adjustments. He wished, however, to explain exactly what were the difficulties which made it impossible for the Government to forecast last February what would be the receipts and the outgoings in South Africa with regard to these Supplementary Estimates. The Committee would recollect that last February they had not then completed the return of the troops, and there was a constant movement of troops from South Africa to this country which went on until last April. There was also the difficulty in regard to the stores sent out. The military authorities had not then decided what transport they were going to keep or what forces, and to take a mere survey of the stores and decide what amount was to be sold was a matter involving many months work. His right hon friend the Member for West Birmingham had not completed his visit to South Africa when those Estimates were framed, and it was inevitable that an immense number of questions must remain entirely unsettled, involving finance in which the report of his right hon. friend was the main deciding factor. This had especial regard to an item of expenditure connected with the railways amounting to £500,000. Those railways were taken over by the military authorities as quickly as they were captured, and they were administered purely for military purposes. They were broken by our enemies in a variety of places, all the chief bridges had to be put up again temporarily, and ultimately repaired. Sidings and short lines had to be added under military control. All this stood at £800,000 in the War Office accounts, and £400,000 was for locomotives and other non-consumable stores. For all this, after proper deductions for depreciation, they expected payment when taken over by the South African Colonies from the civil authorities. That was a charge which was reasonable from the

War Office point of view. There were prolonged negotiations.

SIR HENRY FOWLER asked where the working expenses of the lines came in.

MR. BRODRICK said the working expenses were entirely paid out of the military funds. The military authorities naturally held that they were entitled to use the lines to the fullest extent. It turned out to be difficult to adjust the claims of the civil authorities for wear and tear of the lines held by the British troops, or where they had spent money necessary to repair the lines. He put the case as strongly as he could from the point of view of the War Office, and the case was considered by the Government with great care. In the end the Treasury agreed that this £900,000 should not be charged against colonial revenue. Whether that was a wise policy or not was a matter for discussion, but he thought hon. Members would see that they had no alternative but to treat that sum as it was treated in these Estimates. They could not possibly take credit for the £900,000 still under discussion, upon which the then Colonial Secretary had not advised them. They could not charge it before, because they hoped to have a larger sum, and as soon as the sum could be settled it was brought before the House. He agreed that those charges were unsatisfactory, but in the course of a war, which lasted nearly three years over such a vast extent of territory, such charges were unavoidable, and the question for the Committee was whether the Government had shown want of foresight and caution in not avoiding those charges, or whether they were to blame for not submitting them to the Committee before. He thought he had shown that to submit them before was impossible. As regarded want of foresight, he agreed that in the management of the finance of the war they wanted a better authority on the spot than they had in South Africa. He was attacked the other day upon this point. He might say that the moment he took office he sent out one of the ablest men in the War Office to act as Lord Kitchener's adviser, and the hon. Member had brought before the House the considerable sums which had been saved to this country by that gentleman in South Africa. He was glad that the system they began at Aldershot, Salisbury Plain, and in Ireland was now being followed in South Africa, and he hoped this system would in future not only prevent unnecessary expenditure, but would also bring it within the purview of the House earlier. He was sure that the House would acquit the Government of any desire to depart from the precedent of the past in this matter.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said he should like the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken to tell the Committee why these items appeared at all on the Military Estimates. One million had been voted on two previous occasions in the Civil Estimates, and now when the war was over these items were transferred to the military expenses. He could not understand why they had been so long in winding up this matter. The Estimate contained an item of £900,000 for "Expenditure in connection with Imperial military railways in South Africa." The whole of the accounts for railways in Cape Colony and Natal had been wound up some time ago, and he should like to know why there had been this extraordinary delay in regard to the accounts for these military railways. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to state also why they appeared in the Military Estimates and not in the Civil Service Estimates. Another item with regard to which he wished an explanation was £100,000 for ' Gratuities to the troops for active service." It was known long ago that the gratuities would amount to £1,800,000, and the amount had formerly been voted. He did not understand why this £100,000 had been left behind. The item of £150,000 for the pay of Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa included the famous 5s. per day. He did not intend to reopen that question, because it had already been thoroughly thrashed out. He urged that the equipping of such a force should be in the lands of the regular military agents, because it had been found during the war in South Africa that the Yeomanry Committee competed with the agents of the regular Army for some things, with the result that the Yeomanry paid higher prices and received inferior goods.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT said the House would find themselves in a strange position if the Government made a practice of following all their disappointments by Supplementary Estimates. If the income-tax fell behind the Estimate by £5,000,000 were they to have a Supplementary Estimate? He would be the last to deny that the winding up of the accounts of the great campaign afforded some justification and excuse for considerable arrears, but he doubted whether this general principle altogether justified the enormous Supplementary Estimates which were now before the House. It must be remembered that they had rather lost their standard of measurement with regard to the Estimates. This £6,000,000 represented no less than twopence on the income-tax, and that was a very large amount to bring before the House as a Supplementary Estimate. In addition to the financial obligation it imposed upon the country, it had this secondary effect, that it very largely destroyed the value of the discussion on the Budget. When the Estimates were presented about the usual time they were entirely falsified by the two extraordinary Budgets which the country had now to meet. He referred to the Supplementary Estimates and to the expenditure on capital account. He hoped that the Government, now that we had done with war finance, would get on to the peace footing with the utmost rapidity, and that they would do their best, not only in the matter of frankness in stating fully all the expenditure they expected to incur, but also in regard to pressing their subordinate officers not to make safe Estimates but correct ones, to present to the House budgets worth discussing. It had been said that the House of Commons had somewhat lost control over expenditure in general and military expenditure in particular. He ventured to press upon the Government the consideration of those measures for improving the financial control over expenditure which were set forth in the Report of the Committee on National Expenditure presented last July. He associated himself entirely with what the late War Minister had said in advocacy of decentralisation of audit. One of the grave defects of our financial system was that the audit came too late after the events and was conducted too much by persons entirely ignorant of the kind of expenditure they were called upon to control.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said he thought the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had put his finger upon an important point with regard to Army expenditure and the supervision of the Army Audit Department. He would not go into details, but he would say that the War Commission pointed out that a great deal of the expenditure in South Africa was entirely due to the fact that the Army Pay Department, which had the spending of £80,000,000, was absolutely unfit either by training or knowledge to give any sort of financial expert advice to the general in the field. The late Secretary of State for War had alluded to the fact that when he had taken office he had sent out to South Africa an expert. He did not doubt that fact, but he did not think that it absolved the predecessor of the hon. Gentleman from the charge of neglect in not having done so before, or absolved the Government from responsibility for the increased cost of the war owing to that neglect. It could be clearly pointed out that at least two or three millions were lost to this country by the neglect of having a proper financial department in the field. There was another point in connection with this expenditure upon which he wanted to touch. The second item of these Estimates was with reference to the "Pay, etc., of Colonial Contingents." The *personnel* of the Army Pay Department in South Africa was only half what it ought to have been. Instead of having 130 they had only 65 paymasters, and instead of having a force of 500 clerks they had only 250, and that was the reason all these accounts had fallen so hopelessly into arrear. It was not only the difficulty of collecting accounts from mobile forces, dispersed battalions or scattered departments of the Army, which rendered the collation of these accounts impossible, but it was due largely to the fact that, owing to the absence of paymasters in the field, no accounts in many cases were kept at all. These were the reasons why more than a year after the close of the war they got in accounts for £800,000 for the pay of the Colonial Contingent, and £150,000 for the pay of the Yeomanry. Both of these forces had been disbanded more than a year ago. However difficult it might be to supply the accounts at the time, there was no excuse except the want of *personnel* in the Pay Department for their not having long ago reached the War Office. The Secretary of State for India was a confirmed optimist. He came down to the House when Secretary of State for War day after day, and told them that all was well in every branch of the Army, that the accounts were in perfect order, and that, in fact, not a word of justifiable criticism could be offered in regard to the whole system. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman could not speak freely so long as he sat on the Treasury Bench, but if he was free to speak he would admit, now that he had quitted the War Office, with which he was so long connected, that all was not so well there as he had represented to the House.

The test of good administration was not how much they spent, but how much value they received for what they did spend. The first was a mere spendthrift policy, and invariably brought those adopting it into the bankruptcy court. That was where the Government was landing this country in the matter of Army expenditure. It had been pointed out that the Army Estimates for the current year amounted to £43,000,000, of which this Supplementary Estimate represented something like a fifth; and the official explanation was that no accounting had been at all possible. All this was merely the aftermath of the war. The Government scattered their millions in every direction, and they could not be surprised if, when they were not really winding up but trying to wind up the expenditure they found it had very largely exceeded the Estimates. The late Secretary for War said that after the remonstrances of Lord Randolph Churchill the custom of presenting Supplementary Estimates ceased. He wished the recent remonstrances from both sides of the House against the uncontrolled extravagance of the present Government had had the same effect. Take the case of the Colonial Contingent. While a great deal of this expenditure was due to the lack of accounting, a great deal was also due to lack of preparation for war. The pay of the Colonial Contingent had been throughout the campaign a source of the greatest difficulty for the authorities out there and the War Office at home. Despite the fact that in previous wars Colonial Contingents had been utilised, the experiences of the officers had never been collected and collated. Until three months ago the Government knew nothing about the organisation necessary to start a similar force. They were presenting a bill for £800,0000 to the House when the services of one officer for six months at an expenditure of £500 would have given the War Office the necessary information. This was a practical point, and he hoped the Secretary for War would do something in this direction in the course of his reorganisation. These might be small items but they went to make up a large whole, and the proper supervision of them would contribute to the smooth working of the organisation. The Imperial Yeomanry were charged in this Supplementary Estimate with £150,000. A late Secretary for War had said that that corps was an audacious innovation and he decided to leave them to their own resources. And what was the result? Over £10,000,000 had been expended in South Africa on these colonials, and with the present Vote the amount came to something over £11,000,000. Surely that was a subject worth consideration. When similar cases arrived a large sum ought to be saved by the careful preparation beforehand of the details of successful organisation.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyll) said he should like to know to whom the railways under discussion belonged, who worked them, and who got the profits. According to the Under-Secretary for War these railways in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal were taken over during the war and therefore he presumed they passed into our possession for nothing. An expenditure of £900,000 had been incurred on them, and under those circumstances one would think these railways were a very valuable asset, and he should like to know who received the profit, for surely they ought to pay more than their working expenses, and under favourable circumstances there ought to be a considerable balance to the good. He presumed the railways were now the property of the British taxpayer, and that being Imperial military railways they were managed by military officers, but under whatever circumstances it must be manifest that there must be a profit out of the working of the line.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that in answer to the hon. Gentleman who had spoken he meant to state that the railways to which he had referred were now the property of the Transvaal and Orange River Governments. He believed they were not profitable. He understood a great deal of expense had been incurred to put them in proper order after war usage. It should be remembered that the Committee were now dealing with Supplementary Estimates, of which he had had no previous experience, but he shared the view that Supplementary Estimates if properly presented should deal only with unforeseen expenditure. The hon. Member for East Bristol had made some remarks with which he entirely sympathised, and which certainly had great weight. The hon. Member spoke of the large amount of the Estimates which were due to excessive payments during the war, and he suggested what the remedy ought to be—a remedy which he was perfectly confident ought to be applied, and he hoped very shortly would be applied—and that was to provide the proper financial staff as part of the ordinary staff of every commander in the field. Until that was done and the staff practiced in time of peace to do what it was called upon to do in time of war, there would be this excess of expenditure in every campaign that was undertaken. A vast amount of the excess of expenditure was due to the fact that there had been no preparation in utilising the forces of the Colonials, and also the Volunteers from this country. He believed the irregularity of employing hundreds of men on different engagements, varying from day to day, had contributed largely to the expense and the confusion. He did not say that was avoidable at the time. The experiment having been made, however, they ought never to find themselves in the same difficulty again. They hoped very soon to have a scheme which would, he trusted, enable them to avoid these errors in the future.

The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had found fault with him because he had been sparing in his references to expenditure, and had held out no hope that we might ever return to our normal expenditure in our War Office Estimates. If he did not think that was possible he would not be standing there; but he did not want to anticipate what he might have to say at a later date. The right hon. Gentleman was therefore doing him an injustice in his remarks on a recent occasion in declaring that he had no hope of a reduction in our expenditure. That was not a correct representation of what he had said. What he did say, and what he adhered to, was, that he was not so crazy as to suppose that we could, instantly and at this moment, alter the scale of expenditure on the Army to any serious extent. That he believed to be true, but he should not like that statement to be construed as meaning that he did not believe we could with advantage reduce the expenditure on the Army. On the contrary, trusted he would be able to give effect to the hope which he had expressed at no distant date. An hon. Member asked for information in regard to Somaliland. He had already alluded to the matter, but he might add that the position was this. The Mullah had been driven northwards, by the energy of General Egerton and his troops, to a point which was on the edge between our protectorate and the desert. We had three positions, in fact—one on the west, one on the southwest, and one on the south, near where the Mullah now was. It was hoped that, by the co-operation of the chiefs who occupied this corner of North-East Africa, the Mullah would be placed between four forces, and that so we should be able to deliver a very heavy blow at him. In this way an opportunity might be given to bring these operations to a close with some certainty that the trouble would not begin all over again. The hon. Member for Walsall had asked a question in regard to certain railways in South Africa, and a grant that had been made for replacing railway stock owing to losses in the war. That was a purely civil transaction. The Vote under discussion had simply to do with military expenditure and the operations on the railways for the purpose of moving troops. As to the Army Pay Department they were very sensible of the reforms which were necessary, and he had no reason to suppose that the hon. Gentleman's recommendations would not receive attention. He thought he had answered all the definite questions which had been put to him.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said that with regard to the warlike operations in Somaliland, what they had to complain of was that the Government did not in the first instance tell the House of Commons what were their aims, who would conduct the operations and what would be their probable cost. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the original comparatively small Estimate for those military operations had passed the House of Commons. The House did pass those relatively small amounts very easily, but if the House had been told that they were only initial expenditure, as he might almost call it, he thought the House would require more information than had been given it as to the beginning of the war, who were going to carry it on, and what were the objectives of the Government which when achieved would bring the war to an end. They had the usual paraphrases about prestige and the obligations of this country to certain tribes who had trusted to British authority. But the House had not been given any details and did not know what those obligations amounted to, and how far the interests of this country were involved. At one time there was some doubt as to whether the war was being conducted by the Foreign Office, but it was no use crying over spilt milk, they would have to pay for it. Although he did not share the sanguine expectations of the Secretary of State, he hoped the war would be brought to an end as rapidly and cheaply as possible. The great value of the debate was, however, the eliciting from all parts of the House objections to the unsatisfactory state of those Supplementary Estimates. There were two Leaders in this House who did a great deal to destroy that practice. They were Mr. W. H. Smith and Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone set his face like flint against it, and in his Cabinet, too, and no such remarks could have then been made as were made by the penultimate Chancellor of the Exchequer last year with reference to the support in the Cabinet of the Prime Minister. Mr. Gladstone looked on a Supplementry Estimate as almost a crime on the part of the department which presented it, and it was no easy task to get over his objections. The Estimates were cut down at the beginning of the year with the intention of presenting Supplementary Estimates to fill up the gaps. They were to be regarded as a dose of medicine to be taken in the early weeks of the session before the Appropriation Bill could be passed. They were all agreed that the Cabinet should put down its foot with regard to those Estimates, but the tendency of all departments and the strong influence they were able to exercise, enabled them to continue this disastrous procedure which caused the House to lose control over the expenditure of the year. He was not blaming the Government just now, because no doubt war was an exceptional time; one of the Supplementary Estimates was for £6,000,000 for the Army, and there was also an Estimate for the Navy of £1,500,000 or £1,750,000 and also for the Civil Service. Look how that increased the taxation of the year. The value he attached to the debate was that it directed attention to the financial unsoundness, the tendency to extravagance, and the diminution of the control of the House of Commons, which this growing practice of Supplementary Estimates involved.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that the general discussion showed that military expenditure had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished, unless the country were to be absolutely ruined, and also that Supplementary Estimates had reached such a stage at present that they had become a scandal. Those two propositions having been admitted it was their duty to thoroughly examine the divers items in the Supplementary Estimates. It was no use hopping from one to another and talking about Somaliland one moment and the Imperial Yeomanry the next. The Estimates should be examined item by item, and they should have an explanation of every subject as it appeared on the Paper. The first item was regimental pay, extra pay and messing allowance. It was necessary to some extent to give the allowance, but surely the Government knew the cost of living in South Africa was greater than in England. They were not told the amount of the extra pay that had been given. They had been told by the ex-Minister for War that the soldiers at Wellington Barracks were absolutely in the same condition as would be the miserable Chinese who were to be brought to South Africa to work in the mines. If that were the case there would be no necessity to vote anything, as the Army would be fighting as slaves. He should like the right hon. Gentleman to explain his position on that point. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to do something before they voted a further farthing for the Army, since he thought the position of the soldiers in Wellington Barracks was that which would be the position of the Chinese slaves in South Africa. An explanation was required before proceeding to the next item.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he agreed with the hon. Gentleman that it was desirable that after a general discussion on the Vote they should look into every item and have an adequate explanation. One or two matters had arisen during the discussion which had not been answered. There was the sum which the House was asked to vote for the Imperial military railways in South Africa. They had it that it was an item which they expected would be received from Lord Milner as representing the Civil Governments in South Africa. He wanted to know whether the right hon. Gentleman would lay before the House the correspondence which had passed between himself or the Treasury and the South African Governments with regard to the liability for this amount. Did Lord Milner acknowledge the debt or did he not?

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Certainly.

Mr. WHITLEY asked if the correspondence would be laid on the Table.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said there was no correspondence, but a bargain had been settled long ago. The account had to be written off so far as the Army was concerned, because it could not be paid to the Army account.

Mr. WHITLEY said that as he understood the matter the money when paid would be paid to the National Debt. Was there a contract to pay the money, or was there not? If there was a contract some evidence of it should exist. Was it as flimsy a contract as the bargain entered into by the ex-Colonial Secretary with reference to the £10,000,000? There was a matter of £1,250,000 due to the taxpayers of this country from the taxpayers of the Transvaal, and before it was written off they had a right to know whether it was a good or bad debt or merely a hypothetical expectation.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Does the right hon. Gentleman desire an answer now? I hardly understand what he means by the correspondence. There has been no correspondence; it is an acknowledged debt.

Mr. WHITLEY said he was glad to hear that explanation. He was glad to have extracted so strong a statement as that given to the Committee and hoped in a few days to be informed exactly how the bargain stood. It was extremely important that the Committee should see how it stood and how soon the money was to be repaid. It was only six months ago that this House voted £35,000,000 which was handed over to these Colonies which they could not yet have spent, and if this debt was acknowledged to be due why was not it paid out of the £35,000,000. This was only one illustration of the methods of finance between the House and the Transvaal Government, by which we did all the paying and the Transvaal all the receiving. There was a plea to be made on behalf of the British taxpayer. With Consols below eighty-six it was time they constituted themselves the champions of the British taxpayer. He noticed other items, such as that to the South African Constabulary, £100,000, and a similar amount with regard to the China Expedition. When these Votes were before the House last year they were told the amounts then required were the final amounts. Now they were asked for further sums and were not told whether they were final or not.

*SIR **CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Question of his hon. friend had been clearly answered by the Financial Secretary to the War Office, but the answer given was diametrically in the teeth of the account of the transaction given by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer the right hon. Member for Croydon. The Financial Secretary had stated that this was an absolute bargain; the then Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to no such bargain, and said he had had the gravest doubt whether we should ever get the money back at all.

MR. **RITCHIE** said he asserted there was no bargain at all. It was a claim made by the Treasury against these Colonies and it was contested. When he left the Treasury it was still a matter of dispute between the Colonial Office and the Treasury as to whether this money would be repaid.

*SIR **CHARLES DILKE** said the right hon. Member's observations justified the statement he had made. The hon. Member's impression no doubt was that it was a bargain, but that impression was not true. It was clear that there was no agreement, and equally clear that the explanation of the Government would have been misleading if the matter had not been cleared up. The matter upon which he rose, however, was another matter, and was the most important question which had been mentioned this afternoon in the course of general debate. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had referred to a promise which he thought had been given last year by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer that there would be a reduction in military expenditure, and the present Secretary of State had used language of a definite kind at Liverpool in relation to that matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State had said it was not for him to reply to statements made in the previous year on the question of Army expenditure. The matter had been raised last year on several occasions and finally by a direct Question in the House, and what he (Sir Charles) then understood the then Chancellor of the Exchequer to mean was that he did look forward to a considerable reduction in military expenditure in a year or two from that date. Unless a word was now said upon this point the Committee might be left with a very different impression from what they then had. As he understood, the Government did not desire to recede from what was then said but intimated that at a time of shift and change in the War Office they could not make any such change in the forthcoming Estimates, but that the words of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer were still to be relied on.

MR. **GIBSON BOWLES** said he just desired to make the matter of the £900,000 clear. The Financial Secretary said there was a binding contract to pay it. It was clear that the hon. Gentleman did not believe there was a binding contract, otherwise he would not have put it into a Supplementary Estimate. It was put into this Estimate because the Government believed it to be a bad debt, and they desired to write it off. If the Government believed it to be a binding contract there would be no necessity to write it off. This Vote showed the Committee for the first time a fact which nobody would have believed. It allowed a Government for the first time to withdraw a sum of £900,000 from a Vote, and devote it to a purpose for which it was not voted nor intended. The Committee voted every sum with the greatest exactitude, and thereby, as they fancied, chained up the Government, but they did nothing of the kind, because the Government came one day and said we have taken £900,000 from Army funds and spent it on two railways and we have got a lot of rolling stock and other things which we thought we should have sold and got the money back, but we have not and now we ask you to sanction this. Let the Committee remember that but for this Vote every farthing of the £3,340,000 which was an Appropriation in aid would have gone to swell the old Sinking Fund. It was only this Vote which withdrew it from its proper destination, and when this amount was voted, as he supposed it would be, the result would be to deprive the Chancellor of the Exchequer of this amount which would have gone to diminish the Debt. He rose particulary to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he adhered to the statement that there was a binding contract by the Colonies to repay this £900,000, and if so why he put it in a Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT reminded the Committee that these transactions occurred before he came into office, and the information given to him was that it had been agreed, with the approval of the Treasury, to accept the round sum of £1,250,000. That, he thought, justified him in the language he had used. He now understood from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer that he was wrong, and that the acceptance of the sum did not take with it the acceptance of the Colonies, but the acceptance of the Treasury and the War Office. To that extent he was inaccurate in the language he had used.

Mr. WHITLEY thought the hon. Member had placed the matter once more in a fog. Was this agreement simply one between the Treasury and the War Office, and not between the Home Government and Lord Milner; and did the hon. Member still maintain that there was no correspondence on the subject?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that unfortunately he had not been present during the whole of the discussion, having been engaged in important business in another part of the House, but he thought the Committee had received from his hon. friend the Member for Croydon a clear account of what had taken place. There were included in the Appropriation in aid sums of money to be covered by the sale of stores and animals in South Africa. They were for sales made to the Colonies, and for which the Colonies did not dispute their liability, but in the present state of their finances it was not possible to recover the amount immediately, and therefore the Government were unable to take it into credit at the present time.

Mr BUCHANAN: That is another explanation.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if hon. Members would follow him they would see that his explanation was not inconsistent with what had already been said. There was also a claim by the War Office against the Colonies for a sum of money expended on the railways. The figures of the claim were agreed as between the Colonies and the Government, but the Colonies had raised a counterclaim for damage done to the railways while in the occupation of the troops, for wear and tear, and so forth. That counterclaim was disputed by the Government, who held that they ought to recover the £900,000. He hoped that when the Colonies were in a more prosperous condition the sum would be recovered, but nobody who knew the present position could think that the Government would be wise or indeed that it would be possible to press for immediate payment. He could not at the moment give the exact figures of the counterclaim, but the amount was very similar to that of the claim of this country. The Government did not think the claim a fair one, but the correspondence was still proceeding on the subject. The Financial Secretary had been misunderstood. What he said was not that there was no correspondence, but that it was not in his possession. The Treasury supported the War Office in the claim they had made, and in their objection to the counterclaim. He apologised for his absence during part of the debate; it was not due to any want of respect to the Committee, but because of urgent duties elsewhere.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the point which had troubled him was not so much the absence of certain sums from the Appropriation in aid as the fact that this item of £900,000 was to come out of the taxpayers' pocket, although the hon. Member said it was nominally only a question of account.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN explained that the £900,000 was out-of-pocket expenditure from military funds by the War Office on these railways. Being the subject of a claim against the Colonies, it was not charged direct to the Votes of the year, but was kept in the suspense account as long as there was a prospect of its being recovered within a reasonable period. Now that the Government knew they could not get the money this year they thought the suspense account should be closed, and they accordingly asked the House for the money. They were not writing the amount off as a bad debt; that would be a very different operation; he still hoped to recover the money, which when paid would go to the Sinking Fund.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) thought the transaction was now perfectly clear. The £900,000 had been spent out of war funds, without the authority of Parliament, for the benefit of the Colonies, and because there was no Appropriation and no Parliamentary sanction the expenditure was carried to a suspense account. The Government now found that the money would not be paid by the Colonies, and at the eleventh hour they came to the Committee of Supply to vote the money which had been illegitimately spent out of war funds for colonial purposes.

MR. BRODRICK said there was really no foundation for the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. This money had been expended, not for colonial purposes, but for the use of the Army: it was spent by the engineers solely for the purpose of transporting the troops. The contention of the Government was that the money having been expended and the lines having benefited to the extent of £900,000 that sum ought to be reimbursed by the Colonies on taking over the railways.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) thought it was clear from the explanations that had been made that this £900,000 must be treated as a bad debt. He doubted whether the action of the Government in placing the sum on the Supplementary Estimates had improved their chance of ultimately recovering the money, as the Colonies when pressed would immediately say, "Oh, you have already received the money from the British taxpayer; we are in rather a bad way, and under the circumstances we think we are justified in asking that the matter should be allowed to lie where it is." The incident would simply add to the uneasiness felt both inside and outside the House with regard to the way in which Supplementary Estimates were accumulating. The enormously heavy expenditure of the services had a great deal to do with the distress in all our home trades. £30,000,000 of extra expenditure used in unproductive works must naturally cripple our industries, not only in the amount of capital available, but in the spendable capital for the home markets, which were the best customers for our manufactures. He wanted to know how far this kind of thing was to go, and he was curious to know how the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be a drag on the wheel. The Chancellor had certainly a very uncomfortable prospect before him so far as the Budget was concerned, for there never was a time in the history of the country when it was necessary for the right hon. Gentleman to put on the brake more heavily than at present. They had not only to foresee a very heavy expenditure, but a considerable amount of rebellion among the British taxpayers at the heavy total expenditure of the year. Some of the items were entirely unexplained, and as many of them had not been sorted out in the financial archives of the Treasury and War Office, there would be considerable dissatisfaction among those who would be asked to keep up the standard of the Navy. He considered that these Votes were not only bad from a financial point of view, but they injured the prospects of the First Lord of the Admiralty when he came down for a large Vote in the course of the next few weeks, and if it were only for the sake of the Navy he should join heartily against this proposed increased expenditure.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said there was another item about which they ought to hear something more. He gathered that the Government were hopeful of cutting off the Mullah in the north-eastern portion of the province, but they ought to be told what was the policy of the Government. Did they intend to pursue him into the desert beyond if he escaped? They knew how very elusive his forces were, and the escape of part of his force might enable him to reappear again in another part of the country. They wanted to know whether the Government intended to try and make some sort of peace, or would they go on pursuing the Mullah into the desert? The sum of £1,600,000 was now asked for, and they had been told in reply to a

Question that they were spending money upon this expedition at the rate of £115,000 per month. That would mean another £1,500,000 if it continued for another year. Before they voted this sum they were entitled to have a much fuller statement, or at least they were entitled to have another opportunity of discussing this practice, which had become a very serious drain upon their expenditure. He hoped a proper explanation would be given.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had already spoken twice with regard to Somaliland. He was not at all sanguine about a campaign of this sort. The right hon. Gentleman had asked most fairly what was the policy of the Government in regard to Somaliland. He did not think it was necessary to go through the whole history of the expedition from its initiation. There was very little more to say about the incidents of this campaign, for they were tedious, difficult, and prolonged. One incident was very much like another, except that the earlier attempts were marked by failure and the more recent ones had been marked by considerable success. He could tell the Committee the policy of the Government in a word. In the first place, it was on no account to add to our responsibilities or to increase our territories. In the second place, it was to continue the campaign until they had made it reasonably probable that further raids upon our territory would not occur. He had good reason for believing that they were nearer the realisation of that hope than they had been for some time past. It was a fact that the position was now, from the military point of view, less unfavourable than it had been in the past. It had been stated that they had driven the Mullah into the northern portion of the protectorate. There was a British force in his rear, and on the east side there was another force co-operating. The routes taken by the troops were governed to a large extent by the water supply, and therefore the procedure was not so absurd as some hon. Members appeared to think. The next few weeks they hoped would produce developments which, while they might not be decisive, would throw a good deal of light upon the policy they could adopt in the future. The Mullah had retreated across the waterless desert with great loss to his troops, and he was now located in a district from which there were but limited means of escape. If the Mullah were to escape with an unbroken force and a reasonable probability that he would recommence his raids, the policy of the Government would again be the same as that of any other Government under similar circumstances, for they would have to continue those military operations which they had been compelled to undertake and which the Government regretted as much as any hon. Gentleman opposite. There was nothing more to be said, and he thought he should be simply wasting the time of the Committee if he elaborated at any great length the past history of this campaign. The present was satisfactory, the future was unknown, but the policy of the Government was perfectly clear.

Mr. BUCHANAN said these Estimates included the pay of the Colonial Contingents, and this was one of the most important questions which had been discussed that afternoon. A large number of those items might perfectly easily have been foreseen and inserted in the general Estimates of the year. He did not think there was a single case amongst the many items which afforded a stronger example of this want of prudence and knowledge on the part of the War Office than this item of £800,000 for Colonial Contingents. Here in the last month of the financial year was a proposal for contingents whose services were rendered a year and a half ago, and during that time there had been ample opportunity, if not for definite settlement, at least to enable the War Office to have done something to meet these demands. The total amount rendered under Estimates for this item was only £5,000. The War Office was either so blind or in such a hurry or actuated by a desire to make its figures as low as possible that they grossly underestimated this item. One speaker had said that large sums had been asked for in previous years and there was a balance over, and the conclusion to be drawn from that was that the claims were not satisfied and they ought to have inserted a sum in the

Estimates. They ought to have some more satisfactory explanation from the representatives of the War Office on this subject. By not putting down an adequate sum in the general Estimates the figures had been made fallacious. He begged to move a reduction of this item by £10,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head F (B), Pay, etc. of Colonial Contigents (South Africa), be reduced by £10,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) said the point on which the Committee were entitled to information could be put in one sentence. The Estimate last year was only £5,000, and the amount in the Supplementary Estimate was £800,000. It did not seem that that could be a mistake. Consequently there seemed to be a deliberate underestimate of what the total amount under this head would be. Perhaps it was wrong to impute motives before hearing the explanation, but he thought they were entitled to an explanation.

MR. RITCHIE said that so far as he was concerned he must repudiate the suggestion that there had been any attempt to deceive the House of Commons by putting down an Estimate of £5,000 when they knew the amount would come to £800,000. It was no doubt a startling increase.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said they did not suspect the Treasury of trying to deceive the House of Commons, but the War Office was quite capable of doing this to make things more comfortable with the Treasury. What they objected to was the taking of these sums on the Supplementary Estimates instead of on the ordinary Estimates. It seemed to have been supposed that a surplus of £400,000 from the preceding year could be utilised in order to reduce the sum to a very much smaller amount, but even if that had been the case there would still have been a very large difference between £500,000 and £800,000. That did not explain the whole thing. This was only one of a series of mistakes that had been made. He must press for a better explanation than had yet been given on this point.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had already explained that in the Votes of 1902–3 there was a sum of £400,000 available for the purpose. Naturally, it was expected up to the last moment that this sum would come in, so as to enable it to be used for some portion of this Estimate. He did not think that any hon. Member would suppose that the £5,000 included in last year's Estimate was seriously intended by the War Office officials or by the Secretary of State to indicate exactly what would have to be paid. He was sorry there had been delay in the preparation and auditing of the accounts, but he was not responsible for it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it appeared from what the right hon. Gentleman had just said that he forgot the character of the Vote. The £5,000 was for arrears of pay. It was indicated, therefore, that this would end the job. Having cheerfully voted £5,000 to end the whole of the claims of the Colonial Contingents the Committee were this year confronted with a demand for an extra £800,000. Surely no story out of "Alice in Wonderland" was more curious than this of the £5,000 Estimate which had grown to £800,000. He suggested that it was a step towards intercepting £3,000,000 which would otherwise go to the extinction of the National Debt. No Chancellor of the Exchequer and no Financial Secretary could ever contemplate without the greatest horror the prospect of anything going to the extinction of the National Debt.

MR. BRODRICK said that he was not responsible for the appearance of this sum in its present form. As regarded half the item Parliament was made aware that it would have to be provided, but the adjustment was not concluded at the close of the last financial year. With regard to a considerable portion of the remainder very large sums had been under dispute with the Australian colonies as to the precise terms on which their contingents had to be paid, and as to the precise liability of the Imperial

Government. This caused delay in the adjustment of the accounts. He could assure the Committee that there was nothing in the nature of concealment in this matter as had been suggested. He fully admitted that there was great objection, if it could be avoided, to arrears being brought forward in this way, but in this case, with regard to three-fourths of the money, it would have been absolutely impossible for the House of Commons to have been made aware of it earlier.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said he was entirely at a loss to understand how the money was spent. Somebody in the House was responsible for the money that was expended, but one Gentleman after another had got up on the Treasury Bench to say that he was not responsible. An ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer also had said that he was not responsible. Who, then, in the name of wonder was responsible for the money? Ministers and ex-Ministers had been rigging the pea about, and now it is impossible to tell under which thimble it was. The Australian Governments scouted it, and the men brought an action against them for the payment of their 5s. a day which was paid. Was this payment only an advance by the Colonies, or did these men get 5s. a day from the Colonies and 5s. from the War Office? He wanted to know what the transaction was from the beginning. Last year Parliament was told that these arrears of pay were £5,000, while this year a modest little sum of £800,000 had been sprung upon them; and yet they were informed that no one was responsible. The whole thing from beginning to end was an absurdity, and showed how thoroughly badly the War Office accounts were kept. He did not see on the Treasury Bench the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had disappeared. Were they to take it tacitly that the right hon. Gentleman held he was not responsible by not speaking? The Committee ought to put a stop at once to this kind of procedure, and register some kind of protest. The country was being fooled, and the House of Commons ought to look more closely into these matters when they saw the wrong that had been done. Therefore, for his part, he would cheerfully go into the Lobby with his hon. friend and vote for this reduction. He only regretted that it was not for the larger sum.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said he wished to ask whoever was responsible for this Vote, how many men the sum represented. If it represented 10,000 men that meant that it was pay for 320 days. Then, when did the men actually receive the money in the year 1903-4, or in the previous year, or had they got it yet? He understood that there were still some creditors of the War Office amongst the men. When hon. Members saw the £5,000 on the Estimates last year, they understood that that was to clear up the accounts; and this £800,000, which seemed an absolutely new payment, required a much fuller explanation than had been given.

***Sir EDGAR VINCENT** said the Committee ought to be informed which of these items were token Votes and which were not. Were they to be told next year that, although they had voted £2,700,000, that was merely an intimation that there was a further sum to pay, and had no reference whatever to the real amount? They must know whether these sums were final or not.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said that his hon. friend the Member for Exeter would have an opportunity of judging, when he saw the Estimates which would be shortly introduced. These items represented actual payments, and so far as his knowledge went they were final payments. If not, he should put into the Estimates the sums necessary to cover the costs. He could not tell the hon. Member for Dewsbury off-hand how many colonial troops left at a particular period of the year, or the number of men represented by the vote of £800,000.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL asked when the men were paid.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said he supposed they were paid from the beginning of the war. The accounts for them were not rendered by the Colonial Governments till quite recently. There had been two separate payments to these troops, one by the Colonial Governments and the other by our own Government on the accounts supplied by the Colonial Governments, and checked by the War Office.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said they were entitled to ask the late Secretary for War what were the reasons which induced him to fix £5,000 last year as being the proper amount that would be required. The explanation might probably be that so low a sum was fixed because it would be much easier to get it through the Committee, and thus take away the control of the House of Commons.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) said he wished to know what happened to the £400,000 which was voted, but was not spent. Was it surrendered to the Treasury, and diverted afterwards to some other purpose?

MR. BRODRICK said the right hon. Baronet was perfectly justified in asking the Question. The £400,000 was not spent, and was surrendered to the Exchequer in consequence. The £5,000 was put in the Estimates because he was assured that the sum at that time in course of payment, including the £400,000 which was not spent, would sufficiently cover the charges to be met. The sum the Committee were now dealing with was part of the adjustment of a sum of £10,000,000. He assured the Committee that his one wish in presenting the Estimates had been to put in all charges whatsoever, and to clear off the whole business. He had put every possible pressure on the officials accordingly, but it had been found impossible to get all the items brought into account before the Estimates were prepared.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he hardly knew whether the mistakes made or the explanations given of them were the more extraordinary. According to the answer given to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick there was a surplus of £400,000 from last year, and the explanation was that that sum was surrendered to the Exchequer because it was not considered necessary.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That sum was necessary.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was fully aware of that. It was then stated that only an Estimate of £5,000 would be required, but now a Supplementary Estimate for £800,000 was brought forward. If accounts were kept in such an absurd fashion in any counting-house in the Kingdom or by any county council somebody would have to go. He ventured on a previous occasion to call attention to the manner in which these Appropriations-in-aid were brought forward. That was the way in which the expenditure was increasing year by year. No one made an estimate of what was happening. The Financial Secretary to the War Office said in his explanation that after all they could not be absolutely precise in their estimates. He, himself, did not expect anything unreasonable and if it was only a question of £5,000 or £10,000 the hon. Gentleman's explanation would be adequate, but when only £5,000 was asked for and the Vote was increased to £800,000 it was rather trifling with the House of Commons to make such an explanation. How much more of it would the House of Commons stand? It seemed to him that the terrors of dissolution paralysed the power of criticism of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It was perfectly certain that in their own business they would not allow a clerk who made such a scandalous error and who repeated it to enter their office again.

MR BRODRICK said it was only an error of 4 per cent.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said it was an error of 1,600 per cent.

MR. BRODRICK said that as the Colonies paid £6,000,000 he was over estimating it when he said the error was 4 per cent. It was really only about 2½ per cent.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the war was over ten months before the right hon. Gentleman made his statement last year. He tabled his account in March and whatever happened after that it was trifling in amount. It seemed to him that this was trifling with the House of Commons and that something should be done to have the Supplementary Estimates more carefully framed. The Estimates were increasing year after year and the only man prepared to accept the responsibility for that was the Financial Secretary to the War Office, who really was not responsible. He hoped the House of Commons would record its sense of the absurd way in which these accounts had been prepared.

Mr. WHITLEY said the matter of the Vote of £800,000 for Pay, etc., ought to be explained. Was that amount included in the sum paid in the form of commission to the Colonial Governments for financial transactions connected with the payment of colonial troops? He noticed that the Comptroller and Auditor-General drew attention to certain claims made by the Colonial Government for a 3 per cent. commission on the amount transmitted through them for the colonial soldiers. He wanted to know if that was the case.

*__Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER__ said he believed the commission was paid in respect of stores, but he could not trace the amount.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 128; Noes, 197. (Division List No. 8).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trewlawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Toulmin, George
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Jn. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

Mr. Lloyd-George.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cantley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hngh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt, Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Eilgn & Nairn
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E. W (B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt. Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynemouth
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robers Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tutnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Willoughby, de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wood, James
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed:—

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Adjournment (under Standing Order No. 10)

*DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he rose to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—

> "The promulgation of the Ordinance providing for the introduction of indentured Chinese Labour into the Transvaal before the Ordinance and its regulations have been discussed by the House of Commons in their complete and operative form."

This was a matter of the very greatest importance, and one in which the British people were deeply concerned and the least they could ask was that it should have been treated by the Government or the Colonial Secretary with very great care and circumspection. He thought he was well within the mark when he said the reverse of that had been the act. The Ordinance itself had been hustled through this House with indecent haste, and the regulations they had not seen at all, and were not therefore able to discuss. But the regulations were at least as important as the Ordinance itself, and he could only find one intelligible reason why this thing had been hurried through in this manner. The whole thing was so repugnant to the sense of the British people that the Government got it out of the way as quickly as possible. This House commenced its sittings three weeks ago, and several Parliamentary Papers had been issued. One had been issued before the House met, but it was incomplete and had since the meeting of the House been re-issued. Four others containing 1,100 pages had all been issued since the assembling of the House. On the 4th of this month urgent representations were made to the Colonial Secretary to allow the House to discuss and settle this thing with a perfectly free hand, but the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was that he could not give any other opportunity than was afforded by the discussion on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and they were confined to that discussion. That debate had been taken on the 16th or 17th. Let the House observe the position in which they were placed as the result of that debate. The Ordinance adopted on that occasion was confessedly based on the Report of the Transvaal Labour Commissioners, of which only an abridged and incomplete edition was issued before Parliament met. On the 14th a full copy was issued, with a complete copy of the correspondence between the Colonial Office and South Africa. That correspondence contained what might be termed the first edition of this Ordinance, and that and the second edition, as he would call it, of the Ordinance were in the hands of Members but a few Parliamentary days before the debate opened. He desired to call attention to the striking changes in those two editions, and to the transfer of certain matters which were in the first edition of the Ordinance to the regulations, which they had had no opportunity of discussing at all, of the second edition of the Ordinance. His case was that the regulations, which were the vital machinery to give effect to the Ordinance, and were of equal or more importance than the Ordinance itself, had been promulgated without any discussion in the House. The first edition of the Ordinance contained some exceedingly valuable and humane provisions with regard to the accompanying of the labourers by their wives and children. Those provisions were contained in paragraphs 13, 14, and 15, of the Blue-book, number 1895, page 123. In what he termed the second edition of the Ordinance all those provisions had been dropped out, and were summarised in the regulations which they had never had an opportunity of discussing, although the Ordinance had now been promulgated.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The regulations have never been published.

*DR. MACNAMARA: I am aware of that. Shall we have an opportunity of discussing them?

*MR. LYTTELTON said there would be the usual opportunities when they were laid on the Table of the House.

*DR. MACNAMARA: And in the meantime will the Ordinance be in operation?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Ordinance will come into operation when these regulations are fixed and promulgated, and when they have been forwarded and satisfy me that they fulfil the pledges I have given to the House.

*DR. MACNAMARA asked whether an opportunity could be given to the House to discuss the regulations before the Ordinance came into operation.

*MR. LYTTELTON dissented.

*DR. MACNAMARA said that that being so, this opportunity was the only one of discussing this matter, and he therefore proposed to take it. These regulations, which were the most vital part of the whole thing, would not come before the House and would not be discussed, there was also a third edition of this Ordinance on 10th February, six days before the debate opened, and the changes in that were material and were the result of representations made to Lord Milner. It was not certain now that the Ordinance had reached its final form and yet it had been promulgated. When the debate took place on the 15th and 16th the Government were showering Blue-book after Blue-book, of voluminous character, on the House, and the Ordinance and regulations were still in process of alteration. Apparently, although the Ordinance had been promulgated the regulations which went with it would be laid upon the Table of the House, but the machinery for the recruiting of coolies was now in operation in China, as the telegram of the 19th went to show. He was not certain now whether the Ordinance had reached its final form. The Chinese Minister had made some very valuable suggestions and had suggested that they should be included in the Ordinance. If he was met by the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary the Ordinance would have to be altered again, but whether he did so or not the right hon. Gentleman certainly contemplated entirely altering the regulations to meet the Chinese Minister, and he desired to emphasise the fact that the regulations were far more vital than the Ordinance itself and that they were very far from being in their final form. He protested against the Ordinance or the regulations being promulgated before the House had had an opportunity of fully and fairly discussing them. The day after the debate closed a document was issued containing the correspondence from the Chinese Minister, in which various suggestions were made which, in the opinion of the Chinese Minister, were necessary, in order to prevent the immigrant being made a mere chattel or article of commerce. It was a singular comment upon Western methods of civilisation that we had to go to the Chinese Minister for suggestions in order to find a means of mitigating the barbarity of the proposals sent out by the British Government. He asked, if the Government were going to put these suggestions into the Ordinance, why were people recruiting coolies under the Ordinance at the present time? They had not seen the final draft of the regulations yet, and in the Ordinance there was nothing but the heads of the regulations. When were they going to see these regulations, because he protested against the Ordinance being promulgated until they had seen the whole of them? He did not believe in leaving the whole of this matter in the hands of a Lieutenant-Governor who might be, and probably was under, sinister influences. He understood a conference was to be held with regard to the inclusion of these suggestions in the Ordinance or regulations, and he derived some little comfort from the fact that the Chinese Minister would be present at that conference. He protested against the House being hustled in this matter in the way it had been; the matter was too grave a matter and one which had already caused great consternation in this country, and on this account and on account of the facts he had brought to the notice of the House, he begged to move.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax), in seconding the Motion for the Adjournment of the House, said that recently the Colonial Secretary spoke of the happy

Chinese labourer, who was to be surrounded by every comfort that philanthropy could devise, and presumably that philanthropy was to be exhibited in the regulations which the House was not to be allowed to see. When it was discovered that the Chinese Ambassador had asked for the embodiment of certain important matters in the Ordinance the Colonial Secretary said they were minor matters and should be dealt with in the regulations. But he (Mr. Whitley) believed that the questions to be dealt with by the regulations were the very essence of the whole case and that the House ought to see them before they came into operation. He had put down five Questions which would have to be dealt with in the regulations, and the House would see that the way the Colonial Secretary dealt with these Questions would make all the difference between slavery and non-slavery. The first was whether these unfortunate coolies could be transferred or sold without their consent—whether it would be possible to have in a British colony agents putting up the cry in an open market, "Who bids for 5,000 Chinamen?" Surely there ought not to be any doubt left on that point. The second Question was equally vital. Were the managers of these compounds to be allowed to use the lash as a method of persuasion with coolie labour? The Government were over-ruling the opinion of the House and of the nation in the matter of this Labour Ordinance, and unless they were successful in the demand they were now making for an opportunity of discussing the regulations before the Ordinance became of effect, the House would be responsible for a condition of things from which a most vital provision was omitted. The third Question was—Were the wives and families of these coolies to be confined to the compounds with all the strict penalties and regulations of the labourers themselves? Presumably, they would. Then, would they pay for the maintenance of their wives and families or would they be at the charge of the importers or employers? If the latter, it would be quite possible for the importers to impose a prohibitive tariff. There was a very ominous suggestion in the Blue-book in the Report of the Commissioner of Mines who was sent to investigate this question of employing Chinamen. Mr. Ross Skinner said that it would be desirable to mix up these Chinamen in order to prevent any danger of their combining. Was this proposal to be carried out? The fifth Question was, would it be possible for the employer to have a truck system inside these compounds whereby practically the whole of the money paid to the labourers would be restored to the mine-owner in the form of charges for food of various kinds? Mr. Ross Skinner on this point stated that certain mines could only be worked at a profit even with Chinese labour, by reason of the profits made under the truck system. It would be possible to enumerate many other vital points coming under these regulations. This Motion was made in order to assert the claim of the House of Commons to dismiss an Ordinance providing, if not slavery itself, something alien to the wish of the country and approaching perilously near to that condition of things. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] No one could read the opinion of the Chinese Minister without a blush of shame. It had been left to the Chinese Minister to suggest that the use of the lash should be prohibited and that the sale of human beings as goods and chattels should be made impossible under the terms of the Ordinance. The House was entitled to an assurance from the Colonial Secretary that no single human being would be engaged under this Ordinance until the terms of the regulations had been fully drawn up, and laid before the House for discussion. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he only rose to put a Question which he hoped the Colonial Secretary would answer. The jurisdiction of the Ordinance would obviously be confined to the Transvaal. The Colonial Secretary had pledged himself that certain things should be done in China. Certain regulations made by the Government here would have to be executed in China.

By what authority and means would force be given to those regulations? A still greater danger to these imported labourers was what might happen to them on the high seas. Neither the Government of the Transvaal nor His Majesty's Government had any power to enforce regulations in regard to the victualling, sanitary condition, and treatment of these labourers during the passage from China to the Cape. At the time of a similar importation of natives of the Pacific Islands to Queensland the British Government passed Acts—in 1872 and 1875—for the protection of the islanders during the passage. By the Act of 1872 provision was made regarding penalties for misconduct on the part of commanders of British vessels and certificates of licences required by those vessels, and special powers were given to the Colonial Courts by Imperial Statute to punish any offence against the regulations. If there was at present no provision for the protection of the Chinese immigrants on the high seas, he asked whether the Government would suspend the operation of the Ordinance until some provision had been made by the Imperial Parliament for the humane protection of these Chinese emigrants there.

*MR. BELL (Derby) said he wished to support the Motion. He represented a section of the community which regarded schemes like this with very great suspicion. He felt that everything that was possible should be done by the Government to remove the causes of that suspicion. It was quite possible that there were persons in this country who would like an Ordinance of this kind put into operation at home. Were it not that the working men here had the franchise and were organised in trades unions, there were some employers here who would do what the mine-owners were doing in the Transvaal. So far as his voice and vote could have any effect he was determined to do all he could to prevent such arrangements wherever they were to be carried out. He had been rather struck by the attitude and the suggestions of the Chinese Minister. It appeared that notwithstanding the discussion which they recently had in that House the Ordinance was so incomplete that the Chinese Minister was not prepared to accept it without suggesting fresh proposals for insertion. That was very significant. Personally he said that whatever confidence he might have in the representatives of His Majesty's Government at home he was not prepared to trust the authorities in South Africa so far as the framing of an Ordinance or the preparing of regulations in a matter like this was concerned. They should have the opportunity to examine every clause and every word for themselves. He had no doubt that the sympathies of the Colonial Secretary were in the right direction, but the mine-owners were the real Government of the Transvaal and they needed to make safeguards to ensure that they did not revert to the old conditions of slavery. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said "No." Very likely some of them were of the kind of employers who would like to adopt a similar system in this country. They seemed very cheerful about adopting it in other parts of the British Empire.

AN HON. MEMBER: You do not know what you are talking about.

MR. BELL asked why did hon. Members opposite support proposals of the description submitted to that House last week and which they were discussing that night. Was it, as had been stated by some of the Rand magnates, because they were afraid that white labour in the Transvaal would organise itself and combine for the purpose of dictating the conditions of labour, and also to obtain political power when it had the opportunity? If such was the case, he was one of those who intended resisting, in that House, and out of it, to the fullest extent of his power, their getting such an opportunity. They had in this country hundreds and thousands of labourers who would be glad to have the opportunity of going to the Transvaal and doing the work which was there to be done; and while they had to bear so much of the expenditure incurred there he thought they were entitled to find employment for their surplus labour at home before such a system as was now proposed was introduced in the Transvaal. They wished to know would the Colonial Secretary allow them to see the Ordinance when the proposals of the Chinese Minister had been considered, so that they might know whether they were adopted wholly or partially, and also what was the result of the conference which would be held next day and what would be there agreed to? He thought the people of this country, and at any rate the Members of the House, would like to know and take part in any official arrangement of that kind. The Colonial Secretary had been good enough to say that the regulations would be placed before the House after they had been adopted and that they might then discuss them. They might discuss them as much as they liked, but they could not alter them, and the messengers who were already out in China recruiting these Chinese would try and enter into some binding contract with these people, with the result that they would not be able to break it. He desired to see the completion of this business before any support of his was given, either in that House or in the country, to the proposal, and he heartily supported the Motion for the Adjournment.

*Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said the hon. Member who last spoke supported the Adjournment Motion on the ground that it was the duty of the Government to find employment for our own surplus labour instead of finding work for the unemployed of foreign countries in South Africa. He hoped that the hon. Gentleman would make it plain to those for whom he wished to find employment in the Transvaal that when they got out there they would find a cottage of four rooms costing £200 a year and board and lodging costing 9s. a day, while the best wages for white unskilled labour to be obtained would not be more than 10s. a day. With that paltry margin before them could the hon. Member advise his fellow-countrymen to go out and degrade English white unskilled labour. The hon. Member said it would not be possible to alter the Ordinance when once promulgated if the evils predicted for it should come to pass. But surely it was in the power of the Government to stop the Ordinance the moment it was found to be dangerous to the white or indeed any other population. He could assure the hon. Member that Members on the Ministerial side of the House were equally jealous with himself of the honour of the British in South Africa, and if the slightest taint of slavery should be found to attach to the Ordinance they would at once bring the matter up and vote against the Ordinance. The hon. Member for Halifax had mentioned the despatch of the Chinese Minister. That was only another illustration of the readiness of hon. Gentlemen opposite to take the opinion of foreigners against the opinion of their own countrymen. He would set against the opinion of the Chinese Minister on the slavery question the opinion of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was perfectly satisfied with the explanations given by Lord Onslow. The hon. Member had asserted that according to the Chinese Minister it would be possible for the lash to be used under the Ordinance. Well, he could tell the hon. Member that the infliction of corporal punishment was the last thing in the world calculated to make an unwilling Chinaman work. The Chinese Minister's reference was, in fact, to some treatment meted out to Chinese subjects by other Colonies in days long past, and such things were not in the least likely to happen in the Transvaal. The hon. Member for Camberwell referred to the Chinese Minister's letter as if it were quite unknown at the time of the debate: but if he would carry his mind back to the last evening of the discussion he would remember that an effective point was made by the hon. Member for Lincoln in which he quoted the very phrase contained in the Chinese Minister's despatch as to Chinamen being treated as chattels or articles of commerce. That was taken from the letter itself, which had appeared in the same morning's newspapers, and it was another example of the pernicious habit of giving public documents to the Press before circulating them to Members of the House. These documents primarily belonged to the House of Commons and should be first given to its Members. There was really nothing to justify the charge brought by the hon. Member for Camberwell. It had been further suggested that the regulations would probably contain something that was distasteful not only to the House of Commons, but to the nation at large, and which, if known, would cause the regulations to be disowned at once. He did not think that

that was at all a proper suggestion to make. They on that side had, and hon. Members on the other, once professed the most complete trust in Lord Milner, and he had not belied that trust. To say that he was under sinister influences in the Transvaal was to make a most insulting charge. If hon. Members wished to be well served by Ministers of the Crown they must not make such insulting charges in their absence. Ministers were often charged with want of tact or want of judgment, but he had never known a Minister before to be charged with conniving at slavery. Lord Milner had, at any rate, rescued British subjects in the Transvaal from a state of helotry. As far as he could see there was nothing in the three points mentioned by the Chinese Ambassador that might not be granted. He agreed that the responsibility would rest with those who had to see that the Ordinance was properly carried out. The difference between the supporters of the Government and hon. Gentlemen opposite was that the Ministerialists believed that their fellow-countrymen in South Africa would respect the honour of our flag in the future as they had done in the past, and that the Government of the Transvaal would be as great a success as in other British colonies.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) asked what opinion abroad had been regarded by the supporters of this Ordinance. The opinion in all quarters where the subject was thoroughly understood and known from experience had been put on one side; the views of Australia and America had been disregarded; and attention had been paid only to the opinion of a few nominees of the Government in the Transvaal and of those directly or indirectly interested in getting Chinamen into South Africa. There was any amount of labour in the mines that could be done by white men without their coming into contact with the blacks at all. The only difficulty was that contact, which was frequently as distasteful to the black as to the white, and which could easily be obviated. If the right hon. Gentleman absolutely prohibited black labour in the mines it would be the finest thing that could happen to South Africa. The Kaffirs could find ample employment on railways and on farms. The attitude of the Colonial Secretary on this question distressed him. His name stood for everything that was honourable in an English gentleman, and hon. Members could have no scruple in accepting his word under ordinary circumstances. He pledged his word, the sacred word of an English gentleman, that the yellow man would suffer no injustice, and that, under the regulations which he would publish, slavery would be unknown. But it was utterly beyond his power to fulfil a single word of these pledges. The most elementary knowledge of how things were managed in China would convince anyone that the regulations would not be worth the paper they were written on. Contracts would be made and coolies would be obtained who would be ready to accept any conditions, but they would not be free agents. The fear had been expressed that with a large white labouring population trades unionism would spring up, with the result that strikes and disputes would arise, but anybody with the least acquaintance with the subject knew that the most tyrannical trade union that ever existed was not a circumstance to the tyranny that over-rode the whole of the Chinese labour question. It would be a question not of trades unions, but of the secret societies which permeated China from one end to the other. But an even more serious matter was the proposed introduction of Chinese women into this unfortunate country. Not content with driving 100,000 Chinamen into the country, to the detriment of our own labourers, the right hon. Gentleman was going to introduce 50,000 Chinese women and so many thousand Chinese children. The right hon. Gentleman might salve his conscience with the thought that he had introduced so many thousands of women under the names of Mrs. Ah Sin and so forth, but they would not be the wives of the coolies. No Chinamen, except those of the highest class, ever took their wives with them. What was to be done with the women? Were they to be placed in the compounds, or were they to be let loose on the country to earn their living in any way that seemed good to them? The prospect for the unhappy country was an appalling one. The introduction of Chinese women would be ten thousand times worse than the introduction of Chinese labour. What had happened elsewhere was well known, but the Chinese in Australia and New Zealand were in the nature of accidents, for no Government had ever entered into such an immoral and hateful contract as this. He was not at all sure that this was not the outcome of the royal progress of the late Colonial Secretary or that it was not part of the price we had to pay for the loan which was not yet underwritten. He did not wish to hurt the feelings of hon. Members opposite; he did not speak of them as individuals; but he did say that, in their aggregate capacity, for them to support the Government in this infamous matter was an action they would always regret.

He strongly protested against this selling of flesh and blood for the sake of gold, not only to the present but the future ruination of South Africa for generations. The enlightened opinion of the world was against the Government on this question, even the people who were supporting the Government admitted that this was a bad business, but they thought it would be a worse thing if the Government were out of the office. He sympathised most sincerely with hon. Gentlemen opposite on this question, but he believed they were entirely wrong, and that the Government was wrong. The opinion of Europe, Australia, Canada, and America, was against the Government on this question, and he hoped that even at the eleventh hour the Government would repent. As happened in the days of Israel the unclean thing was in our camp and we could not stand against our enemies unless the accursed thing was removed from our midst.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said it was not very often he troubled the House, but he thought it incumbent upon him to say a few words upon this question. He had listened carefully to the remarks of the previous speaker, and he was exceedingly sorry Mr. Speaker had had to call him to order for an interruption, because his indignation at the statements made by the hon. Member were such that he could not help interrupting. The hon. Member opposite had never seen a Chinaman, but he had. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members opposite would not put him off because he had got his line. He had seen the administration of Oriental races by the British in the East, and he was acquainted with the administration of India, which included a good many Chinamen. There Chinamen were the admiration of those who could express an honest opinion upon them. Personally he was quite prepared to trust His Majesty's Government and the authorities in the Transvaal in dealing with the Chinese and their conditions of labour, which he thought would be for the benefit of the Chinamen themselves and British labour in South Africa. They had had the statement of the Colonial Secretary that the conditions of labour for the Chinese were such that the Chinaman would take them, while that labour had been refused by the white man. The conditions of labour in those countries were not the same as in this country, and they could not put a white man, a black man, and a yellow man upon the same parallel and expect them to do similar work. Work in the mines was divided into two main portions, namely, the supervising which could very properly be entrusted to white men, and the hard work of the labourer which could only be carried out by men of the yellow or black race because white men would not do that work. He asked the House to exercise their power of discrimination, and not bring their overwhelming force to bear upon a condition of things which they could not possibly judge. They ought to trust the governors and those placed in authority with the conditions which would govern the labourers. He knew something of Asiatic races, and he might say that the description given by the last speaker of those races was against all his knowledge, and therefore he could not accept what he had stated about them. He thought that in this case the House should put its trust in Lord Milner, because this was not a question of Party politics. They ought to accept the conditions drawn up by Lord Milner and by the Minister responsible to this country. He hoped the House would treat this question without bias, and judge it fairly on its merits.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) said he had listened with some surprise and disappointment to the previous speakers. He understood that they were discussing the regulations for the introduction of Chinese labour into South Africa, and the principle of the importation of Chinese into South Africa had been accepted. They had now to decide what regulations should govern that importation. The speech of th hon. Member for Stowmarket had been a great disappointment to him, for he was some time a leader of a Party, and all the discontented people in the House followed his lead in regard to Army matters. They would see now that he considered the British soldier was very much like the Chinese labourer, and he was not at all surprised at the hon. Gentleman, after having taken such an interest in the British soldier, taking an equal interest in the collateral subject of Chinese labour. The very essence of this question was centred in the regulation. The importation was an important subject, but it was quite subsidiary to the regulations. What the Colonial Secretary said on the 27th January proved this fact beyond doubt, for he wrote that—

> "The satisfactory working of the Ordinance, if it come into operation, will largely depend upon the regulations."

Why in the world when they were discussing this subject should they have the Ordinance without the regulations which they had not yet seen? Moreover, the Colonial Secretary stated that—

> "His Majesty's Government do not propose to arrive at a final decision until they have an opportunity of considering the law as passed."

But the law depended upon the regulations. There had been some discussion upon a sort of understanding that there were regulations in force, but as a matter of fact there were no regulations, although there were some marginal notes. This was almost like passing factory legislation and giving a department power to deal with overcrowding, protection from machinery, and other vital questions. Although they did not know what the regulations were, they knew what the penalties would be for breaking those regulations. Dr. Jameson, in December, 1903, spoke distinctly against the importation of Asiatic labour. He wished to point out that the questions of inspection, punishment, and *bonâ fide* employer had not been touched at all. Would the right hon. Gentleman give them a pledge that these matters would be attended to. The Chinese Minister had dealt with the assignment, and he had stated that it was necessary for the employer to be a *bonâ fide* employer in order to prevent the immigrant being made a chattel or article of commerce. All their hopes now seemed to be centred in the Chinese Minister. He did not think anybody had a right to say that the Archbishop of Canterbury was in favour of the introduction of Chinese labour. He thought it was a pity that all these suggestions for improving the conditions should come from the Chinese Ambassador to the Colonial Secretary, and not from the Colonial Secretary to the Chinese Ambassador. The difference between the two appeared to be that the Chinese Ambassador was the heathen champion of Christianity, and the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench was the Christian champion of heathenism. The question was whether the House of Commons was to have a right to consider a vital part in this Ordinance. The law was not passed, he understood, until the regulations were in force, and why should they not have an opportunity of discussing the regulations? The success of the Ordinance depended upon those regulations. The House of Commons had consented to the Ordinance, but it would have been infinitely of more value if Parliament had received a detailed explanation of the regulations.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said the hon. Member for North Camberwell had stated that it was not the Ordinance but the importation of Chinese which had caused so much irritation in the country. Only two or three days ago the hon. Member for Camberwell held a meeting in Camberwell. [OPPOSITION cheers.] He was glad to hear hon. Members cheer that, because the whole point of this Motion appeared to be not to discuss the Ordinance but to bring forward a good electioneering cry. He understood that upon this question the eighty London Unionist Members were to be swept from their seats at the next election because they had voted for Chinese labour, and this was to be a sort of climax to the whole thing. The question of the importation of Chinese women and slavery and all sorts of things which had nothing whatever to do with the subject before them, had been introduced. The hon. Member opposite had said this was the only occasion upon which this question could be discussed, but he wished to point out that when the regulations were in force they could be discussed on the Colonial Secretary's salary, and if any of those evils which hon. Members opposite supposed would arise, did arise, they could then be discussed, and if they were so great as hon. Gentlemen seemed to think there was not much doubt that the Government would be defeated and the hon. Gentlemen opposite could then come in and alter the regulations. He should be extremely surprised if the Opposition came into power to see them attempting to prohibit Chinese labour. The fact of the matter was that this was a sentimental question. There was nobody on the Ministerial side of the House, any more than on the other side, who desired the importation of Chinese labour merely to import Chinese labour, but they recognised that the whole future of the Transvaal was bound up in the prosperity of the mines, and the commercial prosperity of this country was seriously at stake at the present moment in consequence. There was no doubt that an increase in the production of gold in the Transvaal would ease the commercial situation. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment to the Address upon this question knew what they were suffering from was want of money and gold in the city, and the thing that would bring prosperity to the workmen, for whom the hon. Member for Derby was so anxious, was the influx of gold and capital into the country, and unless labour of this kind was introduced into the Transvaal to allow the mines to be worked it was impossible to have such an importation of gold. It was not a question of Chinese against white labour but it was Chinese against Kaffir labour. He hoped that when hon. Gentlemen opposite got up to speak they would limit their remarks to the subject before them, and he trusted they would not be treated to any more speeches which had nothing to do with the subject before them, for such speeches as they had heard that night would be more appropriate at the next general election.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) said the last speaker had asked them not to moralise upon this question. When they remembered that there was no morality in those Chinamen he could understand what was meant. He once heard a man say that he had no objection to calling a black man his brother, but he objected to calling him his brother-in-law. The "moral" members of the House said it was impossible for South Africa to be made to pay without the introduction of, he would not call it slavery, but of indentured Chinese. He wanted to ask who watered the whole of this mining stock, so as to make it utterly impossible to realise dividends on the amount of capital invested in it. He had heard of a Member of Parliament—though not a Member now—who in the wonderful Chartered times made £36,000 in twenty-five minutes. That was a good profit indeed, but then they were asked to agree to the introduction of Chinese labour with the view of earning dividends for the poor creatures who had taken the shares at a price which enabled that gentleman to make £36,000 in this way. There had been a document issued calling attention to the virtues of the mining magnates. One mine which was originally promoted for £50,000, of which only £5,000 was paid up, was put on the market and realised £500,000, and it stood at this moment as being worth £2,250,000. If men asked them to introduce slavery in order to pay dividends he wanted to know where the morals came in at all. It was a question how much they could degrade the whole nation for people who had not got their money in an honest way. He held in his hand a letter, not from a Boer general who had been nominated to serve on the Transvaal Executive Council, but from a poor native in which he said—

> "I wish to bring to your notice a question which is at present causing a state of ferment in South Africa—the proposal to introduce

Chinese labourers to work on the Rand. The story told by the mining magnates is that it is impossible to get enough unskilled native labour for the mines. That is as black a lie as was ever told. There are thousands of natives in Johannesburg walking about idle, begging to be taken on."

It was no doubt true that a large meeting of the people of the Rand had been held, at which a resolution in favour of Chinese labour was passed, but men were paid 15s. a head to attend the meeting. They could get them for less than that in England. He wanted hon. Members to get that into their heads, and also the people outside, who after all were a good deal more important than the people inside. It might be quite possible that hon. Members would not be swept from their seats for the opinions which they held at present, but it would not be the first time they had changed their opinions in order to retain their seats. They would bow to the desires of their constituents, and if a pro-Chinese cry would not go down, they would find another which would enable them to forget it.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY: Will the hon. Member give me a single instance in which we have changed our opinions to keep our seats?

*MR. CROOKS said he was not concerned with the hon. Member and his opinions. If he were one of the hon. Member's constituents he would probably trip him up a little but not in this House. They had been told earlier in the day that the recruiting of Chinese labour had been going on. That was a serious thing indeed, having regard to the fact that the Ordinance had not been passed by the House. On whose authority was this being done? Was it on the authority of the Colonial Office or of those people who were an apology for a Government in the Transvaal? They were told that only unskilled labour was being recruited. He had documentary evidence to show that they were recruiting and signing on mechanics, carpenters, and different classes of skilled labour at the rate of £2 per month. He had received this information from a Chinaman, on whose authority he made the statement. He called the attention of a member of the Government to this matter the other day, and he was told that if an employer put an unskilled workman to do skilled work that was not properly classed, he would be liable to a fine of £500. He would put the case this way. Supposing an accident happened, and it was necessary to have a skilled mechanic to do the job of putting the matter right, would they shut the mine until a white man could be got? Supposing a Chinaman were engaged on that work, would the mine-owner or the responsible manager be convicted for allowing him to do skilled work. It would rather be said that he was deserving of high praise for having allowed him to do the work instead of stopping the whole undertaking. As a matter of fact, a Chinaman could do anything and everything that an Englishman could do. What they objected to in Chinamen was their mode of living. The mine-owners knew that directly they got the Chinese they would be able to do without white men. If the mine-owners could get a job done for 2s., they would not give 5s. They might love their country but they loved money more. When they were told the other day that the Chinaman was docile, intelligent, and industrious, he interjected that he was cheap. He would be honest. He would not have much chance of being anything else. He would be kept in a compound and a tunnel would be made for him to pass to the mine, and if he took his holidays they would give him a good bucket of medicine which would keep him honest. And over all this floated the Union Jack. That worried him more than any other thing. He was not one of those who went about the country talking of the valuable asset of the Union Jack. He was one of those who thought it was the sign of liberty and justice for the downtrodden of the world. He thought hon. Members who were going to vote against the Adjournment had an advantage over some other people. The ambiguity of their language enabled it to be interpreted in half a dozen different ways and that was exceedingly useful to the cultivated intellect. Those who were opposed to the Ordinance would require a lot of persuading that what was proposed was not slavery. He had in his possession an election bill which was issued in the constituency of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India at the last election. It called upon the electors to vote for the right hon. Gentleman and "freedom in South Africa." Hon. Members cheered that. The language was exceedingly ambiguous. Freedom for what? They had left it out. [AN HON. MEMBER: —The Rand.] There were white men in South Africa who, at any rate, expected something better than they were being offered. It seemed to him that what was proposed was freedom to the mine-owners to make as much as they could out of the whole thing. What guarantee had they that a proper class of men were to be brought from China? Who was to be the interpreter? He could fancy a man being brought before a Mandarin and told that he was to be an indentured apprentice to King Edward VII., and that he could go if he liked, and that if he did not go he would have his head cut off, or something of that kind. He wanted to know what measures were to be taken to ensure that none of these apprentices would be persons of disreputable character. They were asked to place their trust in the Government. The country trusted the Government three or four years ago, and the result was that we had incurred a war debt of £250,000,000, which had now to be paid off. He would not trust them in this matter. The Bishop of Bloemfontein, who had inquired into this matter, was of opinion that with improved machinery, native and white labour was sufficient to work the mines, but it was not sufficient to work them to earn dividends of enormous amount on watered stock. What was the original amount of the capital at which the mining companies were floated, and what was the capital they now stood at? When they got that information they would be able to say whether this was a matter in which they should sacrifice the sacred principle of liberty. He wanted to know whether what was proposed was in the interest of liberty and right and justice, or in the interest of the dividend-mongers.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have some difficulty in knowing the case I am supposed to answer this evening. A great many speeches have been made, as they were made the other day, about "slavery," and the word "infamy" has been applied to the Government, to myself, and to Lord Milner. I think that Lord Milner can afford, and that I can afford, to regard accusations of that kind with absolute contempt. I always endeavour to suppose in this House that everybody who makes a charge, and a grave charge, honestly believes it; and severely though my credulity has been strained upon the present occasion, I will give a few words to the question of slavery, or so-called slavery. I will not attempt to define it in a pedantic way, as I think it was defined the other day, but I will ask the House to remember that the last instance of the carrying on of slavery by a civilised country was that of America. A man there who owned a slave could coerce him into doing any work that he liked against the slave's will. He could keep him for his whole life doing that work against his will, and without paying him for it. He could even compel his own son, born of a black woman, to be a slave, and he could sell either the slave or the family of the slave, and part the slave from his family. That is what slavery was when it existed in America, the last civilised country which carried it on. And the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton the other night, in a speech in which, I am sorry to say, the word conscience occurred, thought it right to charge this Government and myself with instituting slavery in the Transvaal. Misrepresentation is always depressing, but when it is made in connection with the word "conscience" it becomes positively nauseous. I mean those words; I know they are hard words, but I will make them good. I have said that the condition of slavery in America was a condition in which the slave was treated like a beast. Will any fair-minded man in this House, apart from Party questions, say on his conscience that this contract which the Government propose is one which treats its subject as a beast?

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): Yes; so the Chinese Minister thought.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I hope my hon. and gallant friend can be excused by his ignorance. [Cheers and counter-cheers, and Opposition cries of "Oh," and "Withdraw."]

*THE SPEAKER: Order! order. If the right hon. Gentleman had said anything that required my interference I should have called upon him to withdraw.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I expressed a hope that my hon. and gallant friend would not have said that the subject of this contract was treated as a beast unless he was ignorant of some of the conditions, at all events, of the contract which it is proposed that the Chinaman should enter into. I will endeavour to make good that statement, and when I have recalled the conditions of the contract to him I will ask him whether he still holds that opinion. What is the contract? I have given pledges in this House, a breach of which, if I should be so base as to depart from them, can be visited on me by this as well as by that side of the House, with the condemnation which I shall be worthy to receive if I do break them. The Chinaman, I believe, receives wages in his own country at the rate of about one penny or twopence a day. It is proposed that he should receive at least seven or eight times that amount in the Transvaal. Until I heard the great learning displayed below the gangway opposite, I believed I had information with regard to the Chinese from the greatest experts which this Empire can afford, and they informed me that it is perfectly easy to make intelligible to any ordinary Chinaman a bargain which he is entering into. I think hon. Members opposite who know them, will admit that they are a highly intelligent race. But in order that there may be no coercion and no misrepresentation—and our experiences in this debate make it very necessary to guard against it—we have undertaken that there shall be a protector appointed in China, who is to be at the port of departure, or at a place convenient thereto, who is to go elaborately through the contract with the Chinaman, explain what he is to get under it, and explain precisely the terms of it, what he is to get out of it, and the conditions of labour which he is entering into. If, after the contract has been fully explained to him, the Chinaman chooses to embark upon the contract, chooses to earn seven or eight times the wages he can earn in his own country, in order that in three years he may return and be in a far better position than he was before, then he is at liberty to enter into the contract. That is the first step. The next step is that provision shall be made for a proper and sanitary method of transporting him from his own country to the Transvaal. My right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University asked me a Question with regard to the Pacific Islanders Protection Act, which I think he represented as an Act passed in order to give proper sanitation to the Pacific Islanders. I have taken the trouble to look at that Act, and I see it is an Act for the prevention of kidnapping—for the prevention of the punishment of, and criminal outrages upon, natives of the Pacific Islands. That is my right hon. friend's idea of provision for sanitation!

SIR JOHN GORST: That Act was passed chiefly in reference to the ships which conveyed the Pacific Islanders from their islands to Australia.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have the Act before me. It is an Act for the prevention of the punishment of, and criminal outrages upon, natives of the Pacific Islands.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): There is a second Act.

*MR. LYTTELTON: There is a second Act which deals with kidnapping and the bond which the owner of the shipping must give. That is in the Schedule of the Act and provides for penalties upon the shipowner if he is unable to satisfy the Governor or British Consular officer that no kidnapping has been allowed in connection with any passenger carried. If my right hon. friend had been more careful; if he had given what the true principle of the Act was, he would have shown that. So far is it from this point having been neglected by the Government that an Act was passed in 1855, which I am informed by the officials of the Board of Trade is still in force, which regulates the carriage of Chinese passengers in Chinese ships from Chinese ports, providing for the proper equipment and manning of ships, including any ship from Hong-Kong, or any British ship within 100 miles from Hong-Kong, providing a given amount of space on board, and is, in fact, a sanitary Act of the kind the right hon. Gentleman would have us suppose the Pacific Islanders Act was, and it is applicable to Chinese. So, then, first the contract has to be explained by the officer who has charge of the embarkation in a ship properly manned and equipped, then on the other side we have a protector also to see that all sanitary and all necessary medical comforts and appliances are forthcoming, and then, having proceeded so far on his way to what some hon. Members prefer to call slavery, the Chinese labourer can break the contract at any time he thinks fit, if the conditions which have been explained to him in China at his own home and again in the Transvaal prove to be such that they are disagreeable to him. [Cries from the OPPOSITION Benches of "Nothing of that in the Ordinance."] I am perfectly well aware of that. [Ironical cheers from the OPPOSITION Benches.] I am not surprised at that cheer, for it is the habit of some hon. Members on that side of the House to disbelieve the word of an English Minister. [Cries of "No, no!"]

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) rose to order. The right hon. Gentleman had, he said, made a serious imputation against a certain section of the House—that they were in the habit of disbelieving the word of an English Minister. It was an imputation that should not be borne by any Member of this House.

*MR. SPEAKER said it did not appear to him to be a breach of order.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said he desired to raise another point of order. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary was entitled to refer to what was in the regulations, they not being before the House.

*MR. SPEAKER said he understood the whole discussion was upon what was or ought to be contained in the regulations.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The point I was dealing with when that interruption took place was this. Some hon. Member on the other side shouted out, when I was about to say that a pledge had been given that it was not in the Ordinance. Now I want to know whether, when a definite pledge has been given by a Minister, however unworthy, in charge of a measure for the time being, that a certain thing shall be inserted in that measure, I ask you whether you believe him or not?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): We have a right to know.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I do not care in the least whether the hon. Member believes me or not; it is sufficient for me that there are Members of the House who will believe me. What I have said is that the regulations shall, if the Ordinance does not, provide for the things I have said in the House shall be provided for.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: We have a right to see them.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I now proceed with the subject from which I was diverted by interruptions. Hon. Members must be familiar with those Acts of Parliament which lay down general principles and provide for the framing of regulations, sometimes to be laid on the Table of the House and sometimes not, to carry out those general principles in detail. That is the machinery which is adopted on the present occasion in a matter of difficulty and complexity. Some of the alterations which have been made on the face of the Ordinance have been made in order to give greater elasticity and flexibility, in order that we shall not bind ourselves for all time to a method which possibly may not be proved by experience to be the best. Members familiar with the Coal Mines Acts, Factory Acts, and similar Acts, are well aware that years and years after the principal Act has been passed regulations continue to be made under it. I think that that has been done as much as ten years after the passing of the principal Act.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: That is a very different thing.

*MR. LYTTELTON: What is the present situation? It is that the House affirmed only four or five days ago the principle of this legislation. It affirmed the fact that there was a great shortage of native labour in the Transvaal, and that white labour will not replace that black labour. Those were the first two principles definitely established by our debate last week. [AN HON. MEMBER: By closure.] The third was that this was a matter of the most vital urgency.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: No.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I know that the hon. Member does not agree with me, but that was what the House thought. If I have carried the House so far with me, if they agree that the matter has been decided to be one of great urgency and that regulations carrying out the Act may be propounded by the Lieutenant-Governor five or even more years after the passage of the principal Act, they will see that it would be perfectly ridiculous to ask that the operation of the Ordinance should be suspended for three, or four, or five years. The Ordinance gives power to make regulations continually, and they may be made, if occasion is necessary, several years hence. The Amendment, then, would be an absurdity, because it asks us to postpone the passage of the Ordinance until that Ordinance and its regulations have been discussed by the House of Commons in their complete and operative form. Of course, if we are to wait for that, we may postpone the matter for years. I utterly repudiate what more than one hon. Member has said that we and our own countrymen in the Transvaal are treating this question on a level lower than the Chinese. I utterly repudiate that, whoever said it. [OPPOSITION cries of "Who said it," and "Name."] Several said it. I took down the words of the hon. Member for Camberwell—

> "The Chinese Minister has to be invoked to mitigate your barbarity."

Hon. Members, I observe, first deny that the expression was used, and then, when they are convicted of using it, they cheer it. Well, I say it is untrue—if that is a Parliamentary expression—that the Chinese Minister has to be invoked in order to mitigate the Government's barbarity. The suggestions made by the Chinese Minister were all anticipated by myself—[OPPOSITION cries of "Where?"]—and if hon. Gentlemen opposite think that Sir Arthur Lawley is not to be trusted, let me assure them that I have made provision, lest by any chance anything should be forgotten, that by regulation a transfer of the contract shall not be permitted without the consent of the labourer. I do not blame hon. Gentlemen opposite for not knowing the laws of the Transvaal, but I have been obliged to study them. Unless I am strangely mistaken, hon. Gentlemen opposite are utterly wrong, and the Chinese Minister was wrong, in supposing it was necessary to provide that corporal punishment shall not be permissible. I maintain, without any fear of contradiction, that the scheme of the Ordinance upon that point leaves the mine-owners without any power to inflict corporal punishment on the Chinese. Were they to do so the Chinese, as temporary citizens of that country, would have their remedy against them. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean the other day went out of his way to accuse me of being personally responsible for a violation of the Truck Act. It is not often that he is unacquainted with what he talks about, but I daresay he is not aware that by the law of the Transvaal the practices at which the Truck Act is directed are illegal. It is not intended to infringe that law by means of the Ordinance.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: My point was simply that the whole compound system violates the whole spirit of our Truck Act.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I understand the Truck Act in a less liberal sense than the right hon. Gentleman. That Act cannot be infringed by this Ordinance unless the law already existing in the Transvaal is specifically repealed. One other complaint is made—that recruiting was going forward in China. Why not? Anybody has a perfect right to enter into preliminary arrangements in order to obtain these coolies, subject to the law which will be made to regulate this matter. No one in this House or out of it has the slightest power to stop it.

Major SEELY rose, and remained standing for a while amid loud and repeated cries of "Order" from the Government Benches and of "That is English courtesy" from the Irish Benches, but eventually resumed his seat.

*Mr. LYTTELTON, continuing, said:—I do not suppose that many hon. Members are aware that before this session it would have been perfectly competent for any citizen in the Transvaal to have introduced Chinamen into the Transvaal. The only purpose of this Ordinance was that legal effect might be given to such restrictions as appeared desirable when they were introduced.

Major SEELY: What was your predecessor's pledge?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Do right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite think that indentured labour under restrictions is a novelty in the British Empire? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, as a former Secretary of State for India, knows this practice very well, because coolies have left India under indentures, under, I suppose, his actual authority, and under conditions very slightly differing from those we are considering.

Mr. CROOKS: Not in compounds.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: In the Trinidad Ordinance he will find that compulsory residence on the premises of the employer was prescribed for the coolies who were imported under indenture from British India. I trust I shall always be perfectly frank with the House, and I desire to say that it is true that there is more holiday for the Trinidad coolie than is proposed under this Ordinance, but the conditions are not widely different. They cannot terminate the contract as we propose that the Chinamen should be able to terminate it. I respectfully submit that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, who was Secretary of State for India, and who, therefore, was responsible, for the time they were in operation, for these Acts which regulated the importation from India of coolies to the Colonies, should think well before he accuses this Government of instituting a system of slavery. I do not wish to embitter this discussion; but I do say this—that it is impossible to get really the true inwardness of this Amendment and of this discussion without ascertaining that hon. Members who support the Amendment decline to believe what is pledged here on behalf of the Government and what is pledged on behalf of the Transvaal Government and Lord Milner. That is the position which hon. Gentlemen opposite take up, and I venture to say that they cannot get out of it. If these pledges are to be believed, then what you require will be effected. If they are not to be believed, then you will have ample opportunity when the regulations are laid on the Table, as they shall be, of moving a vote of censure on the Minister who has broken those pledges. That opportunity you shall have. These regulations shall be laid on the Table. If they do not carry out our pledges, we shall expect, and we shall deserve, the censure of the House.

***MR. ASQUITH** (Fifeshire, E.): In the speech which the Colonial Secretary has just delivered he has attached, I venture to think, a very exaggerated and a very unnatural interpretation to the fact that this House last week, by an attenuated majority, refused to pass a vote of censure on His Majesty's Government. My right hon. friend, in the course of his speech, acknowledged the invalidity of the claim he made by elaborately re-arguing the merits of the question and by endeavouring to demonstrate to us by imputation, that my right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton had in a former case practically legalised the condition of slavery. My right hon. friend says that nobody can charge this Ordinance with legalising slavery unless he is in ignorance of the facts; yet he points by way of substantiating his argument to the precedent which he says exists, and he spoke of Trinidad and other parts of the British Empire. Let me examine that contention for a moment in the light of the facts. In the first place, is there any immigration Ordinance anywhere in force in the British Empire which does not limit the number of days in the year on which the workman is to labour? There is no such limitation in this Ordinance. I ask another question. Is there any immigration Ordinance in force in the British Empire which puts no limitation whatsoever on the number of hours in the day for labour? There is no such limitation in this Ordinance. Is there any Ordinance in force in any other part of the British Empire which makes no provision whatever as to the rate of wages? If my information is correct, in practically all these Ordinances provision is made that the wages to be paid to the indentured workman are to be at the same rate, or at any rate in the same ratio, as the wages paid to labourers not under indentures in the district in which they work. Then, again, so far as my information goes, with the exception, if it be an exception, of the solitary case the right hon. Gentleman has referred to, there has never been anywhere else in the British Empire a provision that the labourer must not quit the premises of his employer for more than forty-eight hours, and then only with a permit. Then, finally, is there anywhere in any other Ordinance in any part of the British Empire a clause parallel to the 11th Clause of this Ordinance, to which the Chinese Minister took, I think, just exception—a clause which enables the indentured labourer to be sold without his own consent from one employer to another? I confess I think this is one of the least creditable things in the history of diplomacy that it should appear in a Paper presented to Parliament that an enactment of that kind, deliberately made by a British Legislative Assembly, and apparently to be sanctioned by the British Crown, has been protested against by the Minister of a foreign Power. My right hon. friend seems to regard the imputation of slavery as mere rhetoric and clap-trap.

*MR. LYTTELTON: My right hon. friend has asked whether any Ordinance in any part of the British Empire contains the power to transfer a contract. I find that Section 199 of the Trinidad Ordinance states that if at any time there shall appear to the Governor sufficient grounds it shall be lawful for him to transfer a labourer during the length of his service from one employer to another.

*MR. ASQUITH: Let me point out that there is a broad distinction between a thing done on the initiative of the Government and the thing done here on the initiative of the employer, although it may require the assent of the Government to carry it out. ["Oh!"] If the right hon. Gentleman challenges me on that point, why is he going to accept the protest of the Chinese Government? If the Trinidad Ordinance is sufficient security for the freedom of the labourer, why is he going to alter this?

*MR. LYTTELTON: My right hon. friend asks me a Question. [Interruptions.]

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: You would not give way to Seely.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Before this message came from the Chinese Minister I had already made provision that that should be with the consent of the labourer.

MR. ASQUITH: But, I am dealing with this Ordinance as it stands; and the 11th Clause, as it was presented for the assent of Parliament, in my opinion, completely transforms a contract of service into a status of serfdom, because it is of the essence of free service that the servant should have the power to exercise a veto on the transfer of his service from one employer to another. The right hon. Gentleman was indignant because he says we would not accept his pledges. It is not a question of believing in the good faith either of the Minister or any other servant of the Crown. I entirely protest against any such language. It is the case of the House of

Commons abdicating its functions. Let us see your pledges, not in vague and in indefinite language, but translated into the language of the law, put into the Ordinance and into the regulations which we can criticise and scrutinise, accept or reject, as they commend themselves to our judgment or otherwise.

Let us come now for a moment—for this is the root and essence of the question—to the matter of the regulations themselves. What are these regulations? So far as the House is concerned, at this moment they are a piece of blank paper, but what do they deal with? Let me call attention to some of the matters which are left to the local Government by regulation to settle for themselves. I will quote three or four. The third is for the proper enforcement of contracts with labourers; the fifth is for the introduction, repatriation, and control of the families of labourers; the seventh, for the proper control of labourers; and the thirteenth, for preventing desertion from service by labourers. All these are matters which vitally affect the liberty of action, the comfort of life, and the ordinary daily existence of the labourer himself. You have given to the local authority of the Transvaal the power to make regulations on these vital matters, and (let the House not forget), by the 30th clause of the order, to enforce the regulations in the case of a labourer by a fine not exceeding £20, or imprisonment not exceeding six months. I say the House of Commons, in what everybody will admit is a question of extreme delicacy and complexity affecting vitally the liberty of the subject in that distant part of the dominions of the Crown, ought not to give a blank cheque to the local Executive to make regulations of this kind enforceable by fine or imprisonment without having the regulations submitted to it. The hon. Member for Stowmarket said—

> "Cannot you trust the representatives of the Crown on the spot?"

Yes, Sir, I am not going to make any imputations of any sort or kind upon them. But it is a fundamental principle, not only of law, but of common sense, that you may not delegate a trust, and this House in this matter is itself a trustee. It is a trustee not only for the white population, which is the dominant class; it is a trustee not only for the black population, which constitutes the great bulk of the indigenous race; but it is a trustee for everybody who under the protection of the Crown, with the authority and consent of the Government, and still more by its invitation and by its contrivance, comes within the dominions of the Crown, and becomes subject to its laws and its jurisdiction, and you cannot without grave dereliction of the duty which this House has always assumed, and which up to now, I believe, it has continuously and diligently discharged—the duty of watching over the liberty of everyone from whatever part of the world he may come who is for the time being on British soil and subject to British control—you cannot, without a grave dereliction of that great and traditional constitutional function, hand over to the discretion of a local authority the power of dealing with a matter of this kind which vitally affects the fundamental liberties of the people.

How is this going to be done? It is done, as we know, and as is not denied, in defiance of the opinion, so far as it has found articulate expression, of all the self-governing Colonies of the Crown. It is done in defiance of the opinion, as far as it has or can be expressed, of the great mass of the people of this country. There is not an hon. Member opposite who will not agree that if a proposal of this kind had been made to the House of Commons twelve or even six months ago it would have been rejected by a practically unanimous vote and repudiated, scouted, and laughed out of existence. What is the change? Simply that people are in a hurry and will not wait for the natural operation of remedial forces in a country devastated by war and misfortune of every kind. I say with all confidence that a weaker case for an interference so grave and fundamental with the essential liberties of British subjects and people living under British protection was never before presented.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked why, if the Colonial Secretary had made up his mind to alter the Ordinance in the respect he had mentioned, before the Chinese Minister suggested the alteration, no allusion was made to the circumstances in the reply to the Chinese Minister's letter?

*__MR. LYTTELTON__: What I stated was that I intended to instruct the Lieutenant-Governor not to consent to transfer of contracts without the consent of the labourer.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he wished to ask another Question.

*__MR. SPEAKER__ said that the hon. Member could not speak a second time.

Question put:—

The House divided:—Ayes, 156; Noes, 212. (Division List No. 9.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trewlawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah

M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh,N.)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Rchard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Toulmin, George
Walton, Jn. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk,Mid.
Woodhouse,Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar,Sir T.R(Tower Hamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, SirRobert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, RtHnLordG(Midd'x
Hamilton,Marq.of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris,F Leverton(Tynemouth
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson,Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hobhouse, RtHn.H(Somers'tE
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F(Sheffield,Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop)
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee

Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milner, Rt Hn. Sir Frederick G
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn.J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt.Hn.Col.Edw.J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mb.Tynside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W, F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'dUniv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent,Col.SirC.E.H.(Sheff'ld.
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt.Hn. C. B. Stuart.
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time this day.

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY BOROUGH OF BOLTON).

Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an inquiry held in the county borough of Bolton into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that county borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the county borough; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Reports."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*)

HOUSE OF COMMONS (KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the Department of the Serjeant-at-Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Dalziel, Sir Horatio Davies, Sir Thomas Firbank, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Jacoby, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lonsdale, Dr. MacDonnel, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. George Ormsby-Gore, Mr. Pierpoint, Mr. Power, Mr. William Redmond, and Sir Harry Samuel.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 23rd February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Clyde Valley Electrical Power [H.L.]. And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Marylebone Chapels (St. James, Westmoreland Street) (Petition for Bill). The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1ª.

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways Bill; London United Tramways (Railways) Bill. The order of Thursday last referring the Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next, discharged.

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.:—L. Herries, L. Muncaster; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª [The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)], and reported from the Committee. (No. 14.)

PETITIONS.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].

Petitions in favour of; of the Provost, etc., of Selkirk; Corporation of Folkestone; Corporation of Stockport; Corporation of Chatham; Provost, etc., of Inverness; Corporation of Brighton; Nottingham Chamber of Commerce; Sheffield Chamber of Commerce; Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce; London Association for the Protection of Trade; and Town and County Councils, Merchants, Members of Chambers of Commerce, Schoolmasters, Teachers, Ministers of Religion, Shop keepers and Retailers, Manufacturers, Engineers, Trades Unions, Members of Trades Unions and Workmen, and others. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board of Ireland in substitution for Rule 28 of 1st May, 1903.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Aberdeen under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD BELHAVEN AND STENTON: My Lords, in rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill I feel considerable diffidence owing to its large and universal scope, affecting every person within the United Kingdom. I would gladly have left it to His Majesty's Government to have initiated legislation on a subject which a very great number of people regard as one of vital importance to the welfare of the country; but, from answers which have from time to time been given by Ministers to deputations which have advocated this measure, it is clear that, however much they sympathised with the object and believed in its utility, they did not consider, at the time those answers were given, that public opinion was sufficiently ripe for the compulsory introduction of the metric system. It will be my object to-day,

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

among other aims, to show how very strongly public opinion has now come round in its desire for this measure. I will not go further back in the history of the movement than the year 1895, when a Select Committee of the House of Commons sat for a considerable time and took exhaustive evidence on the whole subject. In July of that year the Committee published their Report, and I have caused that Report to be printed with the Bill in order that your Lordships might have an opportunity of studying it at your leisure. I will therefore only read the three recommendations contained in that Report—

(*a*) That the metrical system of weights and measures be at once legalised for all purposes.

(*b*) That after a lapse of two years the metrical system be rendered compulsory by Act of Parliament.

(*c*) That the metrical system of weights and measures be taught in all public elementary schools as a necessary and integral part of arithmetic, and that decimals be introduced at an earlier period of the school curriculum than is the case at present.

Of these three recommendations the first was complied with by the passing of the permissive Act of 1897. By this Act the use in trade of a weight or measure of the metric system was made lawful, and a person using or having in his possession such a weight or measure was not by reason thereof liable to a fine. The Act further provided that the Board of Trade standards should include metric standards, and it was made lawful for the Queen, by Order in Council, to make a table of metrical equivalents. Such tables have been published by the Board of Trade. This Act was a great relief to those manufacturers who were making goods for export to countries where the metric system was in force, but there appears to have been a serious omission in that Act, in that inspectors of weights and measures were not given power to verify and stamp the metric weights and measures so used.

The third recommendation—I pass for the moment over the second—of the Select Committee has also been complied with. The metric system has been taught in the elementary schools under the Educational Code of 1900, but it is to be regretted that though the teachers give much time and trouble to teaching this new subject, in many cases the examiners have not asked any questions in that section of arithmetic. Therefore school teachers are very much disheartened when they find that inspectors seem to look upon it in a half-hearted way and they get no credit for the time they devote to the teaching of it. If this Bill passes it will be the means of infusing a great deal more energy into this particular subject. But while the first and third recommendations of the Select Committee have been acted upon, the second—the most important of all—which proposed that after two years the metric system should become compulsory by Act of Parliament, has not been noticed, notwithstanding that over eight years had elapsed since the recommendation was made. It is to meet that recommendation that the Bill now before your Lordships has been introduced. After the Report of the Select Committee had been made the advocates of the metric system continued their campaign. In November, 1895, a deputation from the Chambers of Commerce throughout the Kingdom, supported by the Decimal Association, waited upon Mr. Balfour. In reply, Mr. Balfour expressed himself in favour of the metric system, and concluded with the following words—

"The compulsory change to which we all look forward could not, with safety or advantage, be undertaken by the Government till public opinion is more prepared for it than at present. The public opinion with which we have got to deal, and which we are bound to consider, is not the public opinion of the great manufacturers alone, but the public opinion of every man and woman you meet in the street. While I look forward to the time, and no distant time, when they will adopt the change without difficulty and without repugnance, I should like to see private enterprise do more than it has done up to the present to show that the change can be adopted without inconvenience, and that it carries with it all the benefits which I, in common with you, firmly believe to be attached to the metric system, and which it is hopelessly impossible to associate with the arbitrary, perverse, and utterly irrational system under which we have all had the misfortune to be brought up."

In March, 1899, a deputation from the Decimal Association waited on the President of the Board of Trade, and Mr. Ritchie replied much in the same terms. He recognised that the proposed change would be an advantageous one for the country, but he was of opinion that the public demand for it was not yet sufficiently strong to justify the Government in making it compulsory. In June, 1900, a Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire was held in London, when a strong opinion was expressed by resolution that the metric system should be rendered compulsory after two years. An important point in the history of this subject is that in August, 1902—the period of the Coronation—there was a Colonial Conference attended by all the Premiers of the self-governing Colonies, and they passed this Resolution—

> "It is advisable to adopt the metric system of weights and measures for use within the Empire, and the Prime Ministers urge the Governments represented at this conference to give consideration to the question of its early adoption."

Since that time our self-governing Colonies have taken the matter up with great earnestness. The Federal House of Representatives for Australia passed strong Resolutions in its favour. In New Zealand a Weights and Measures Act was passed by the Colonial Parliament last year, Clause 25 of which empowered the Governor, by Proclamation, to enforce the compulsory introduction of the metric system; such proclamation, however, was not to be issued prior to 1st January, 1906. The Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire met again, in Montreal in 1903, and passed a similar resolution. The Cape of Good Hope House of Assembly has agreed to a Motion in favour of a communication being addressed to the Imperial Government on the subject of the adoption of the metric system. The Transvaal Chamber of Mines have also signified their cordial approval of the proposal, and their willingness to co-operate in giving effect to it. The Governors of Malta and Bermuda have intimated the desire of the inhabitants of those islands for the introduction of the metric system.

The present system of weights and measures, under which this country and its Colonies and dependencies are suffering, is most cumbersome, and is absolutely unsuited to the enormously developed business of modern times. All civilised nations, with the exception of Great Britain and her dependencies, the United States of America and Russia, have abandoned their antiquated system and adopted the metric one; and in the two latter countries steps are being taken in the same direction. At the present moment there is a Bill before the Congress of the United States in which it is proposed that—

> "On and after 1st January, 1906, the weights and measures of the metric system shall be the legal standard of weights and measures of and in the United States."

I do not know whether that Bill will pass or not, but I believe there is a strong probability that it will. Russia has done a little in the way of moving towards the adoption of the metric system, for instructions have been given by that Government to iron and steel works to alter their rolling machinery so as to produce only rods, rails, and sheets on a metric scale. And, again, both in the United States and in Russia the prescriptions in the Pharmacopœia have been made out according to the metric formulæ.

The disadvantages under which we are labouring, and which it is the object of this Bill to remove, may be classed under three heads: (1) The loss both in time and money which is involved in business and trade within our own country; (2) the serious waste of time in the education of children of all classes caused by the teaching of complicated tables of weights and measures and their application to arithmetic; and (3) the lamentable loss of our commerce with foreign countries through the use of weights and measures which are perfectly incomprehensible to foreigners who are accustomed to use the simple metric system. Dealing first with the measures used in this country, the inch, foot, yard, furlong, and mile are those most familiar, but nails, palms, hands, links, cubits, paces, fathoms, rods, poles or perches, chains, and many others are used in different trades and professions. When we come to smaller measures than an inch, especially where extreme accuracy is required, as in mechanical engineering, the usual system is to divide the inch into a half, a quarter, one-eighth, one-sixteenth, one-thirty-second, one sixty-fourth, and even further. Here is one of the first difficulties we come to. In laying out some work the workmen may have in succession such quantities as these—$3\frac{1}{4}$ ins., $2\frac{1}{8}$ ins., $1\frac{7}{16}$ ins., $\frac{39}{64}$ ins., and so on, and to add these quantities together requires much calculation with considerable liability to error. Frequent mistakes occur in reading a plan by taking $1\frac{3}{16}$ for $\frac{13}{16}$, or $1{\cdot}1\frac{1}{4}$ ins. is read as $11\frac{1}{4}$ ins., and *vice versâ.*

In the measurement of fields and larger areas of land some attempt has been made to work on a decimal system by measuring with a chain divided into 100 links, and reducing square chains to acres by dividing by ten. But this is not always the practice, especially in the case of building land where the measurements are taken in feet and inches. Such mixed quantities, when multiplied together, produce square feet and a remainder of square inches. These are reduced to square yards by dividing by nine. The next step is to divide by $30\frac{1}{4}$ to get to rods, poles, or perches, as these are alternatively called in different parts of the country. This being accomplished the poles are divided by forty for roods, and again by four to get the number of acres. We now have the area of our plot of ground in so many acres, roods, poles, square yards, square feet and inches, and when the next step is to find the value of the ground, at, say, £76 16s. 0d. per acre, the whole process has practically to be gone over again. How different is the simple method of measuring the length and breadth in metres and decimals of a metre, multiplying these, shifting the decimal point four places, when we get the number of hectares, with fractional part expressed in decimals, when the price can be worked out by simple multiplication.

Turning now to measures of capacity, both dry and liquid, we come to such a multiplicity of names that I should weary your Lordships if I were to enumerate them. The whole of these names do not apply both to dry and liquid measure, and they have no precise connection with their cubic capacities expressed in inches. For instance, the pint contains 34·66 cubic inches. There is also an apothecaries' fluid measure into which fluid ounces, drachms, and minims are imported. But the climax of complication is arrived at when we come to weights. Here we have the avoirdupois system as well as troy and apothecaries' weights. In troy weight there are twelve ounces to the pound, in avoirdupois there are sixteen; at the same time, a troy ounce is not the same weight as an avoirdupois ounce, nor is a troy pound equal to an avoirdupois pound. The apothecaries' ounce is divided into drachms, scruples, and grains, whilst the troy ounce is divided into pennyweights and carats. Again, a stone in most cases is fourteen lbs., and such a stone is habitually used in talking of a man's weight, as also with live meat; but, in the case of dead meat, a stone is only eight lbs, and in the case of glass, five lbs.

I have been speaking only of legal weights; but all over the country there are customary weights, peculiar to each county or district, which complicate matters more than ever. But the people do not care to change their habits only to deal with an equally cumbersome legal weight. If the simple metric system were introduced it would quickly displace the local customs. And here I would especially draw the attention of your Lordships to the evidence of Mr. Kyle, County Inspector of Weights and Measures for Buckinghamshire, before the Select Committee of 1895, which I here refer to as showing the very great secondary benefit which will be obtained by passing this Bill—I mean the facility it will give to put down illegal weights and measures, which assist unjust dealing, by giving opportunity to unscrupulous dealers to take advantage of the ignorant and uneducated. Mr. Kyle mentions in reply to question No. 2923, that a bushel of corn in Sunderland equals 46 lbs.; a bushel of corn in Shropshire varies from 72 to 75 lbs.; a bushel of corn in Hereford equals 63 lbs.; and a bushel of corn in Newtown equals 80 lbs. This shows how easily people may be defrauded in ordering bushels of corn from various places. Speaking of these customary weights and measures, and in reply to a question, Mr. Kyle said—

> "No inspector would endeavour to put down the customary measures, as he has the power to do, because he would handicap his own traders and his own ratepayers. Take my instance. We send to London a large quantity of milk from Buckinghamshire by two special trains a day, and that milk is sold by the barn gallon to London wholesale milk-buyers. If I were to abolish, as I have power to do, the

barn gallon, I should handicap all the farmers in Buckinghamshire, to the advantage of farmers in Hertfordshire, and other counties. If an Order came universally, that is to say, from the Board of Trade, that every inspector was to put down customary measures, I feel certain that there are very few inspectors who would not immediately carry out the order; but when every inspector has the power to please himself, he is not likely, at any rate, to handicap his own ratepayers."

He also went on to say—

"The Act would have to be obligatory to remove all these local measures, as they assist unjust dealing and do not give people a fair opportunity of trading."

As in measures of capacity there is no direct connection with measures of length, so in weights there is no connection with capacity. For instance, in Cornwall a bushel of potatoes is sold as 224 lbs., and in Nottingham as only 84 lbs. In several places apples are quoted as 16 lbs. to the peck, potatoes as 20 lbs., and pears as 18 lbs. to the peck. In Worcestershire a pot equals four pecks, but in other counties the pot varies from 64 lbs. to 94 lbs.

The second objection to our present system is the waste of time in teaching it to children. It is not alone the teaching of the tables which I have just referred to—it is the whole system of compound addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, and the system of computation called "Practice." It is estimated, on high educational authority, that every child wastes one year of its arithmetical school time in learning these subjects and that in many cases the time lost is much greater. Last year inquiries were made of head-masters of schools on this subject, and 197 sent replies, of which 161 said that saving of time in teaching the metric system would be one year, thirty said it would be two years, and six that it would be three years. This gives a French or German child a great advantage over an English child, as the time saved can be applied to some more useful subject. I should like to quote from one of the many letters received. The senior mathematical master of Edinburgh High School wrote—

"An average scholar would save at least a year and a half, probably two. This saving is great in itself, but if it be considered how much he saves by not being subjected to a wearisome process of acquiring the knowledge, say, to convert ordinary yards to poles and *vice versâ*, or square yards to perches and give a rational remainder, and the wearing out of his nervous system—not to speak of the teachers'—I conceive it to be not only a saving of time but an economy of mental effort which is incalculable."

The objection does not lie only in the time which is wasted. The child is wearied and disheartened by the difficulties of the subject; and, in the case of boys at our public schools, many get such a distaste for arithmetic that they lose all desire to study mathematics afterwards, and I think this has much to do with the low standard of mathematical knowledge in this country.

The third evil resulting from our present system is by far the most important. It is the great loss of trade and commerce resulting from our using, for our exported goods, a system of weights and measures that is so incomprehensible to foreign nations that they prefer to pay more and get less good quality from sources where weights and measures are used that they can understand. For many years the British Consuls in foreign countries have reiterated, time after time, the loss of British trade from within their district from this cause. I will read two or three extracts from these reports, but it would not be difficult to pick out a very large number of similar statements from Foreign Office Papers. In the *Board of Trade Journal* of 15th February, 1900, a report was published which had been forwarded to the Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce by the British Consul at Amsterdam. This report dealt with the commercial value of the metric system, with special reference to the classification of German iron manufactures. The following is an extract from it—

"The Iron and Steel Manufacturers' Unions of Germany have adopted a uniform system of dimensions (based on metric weights and measures). The classifications are making more and more progress in Germany, not in the iron trades alone, but in other manufactures. In the future Germany, and the Continent generally, will have a constantly-increasing advantage over British manufactures in foreign countries, unless the metric system be fully and entirely adopted by Great Britain. I may mention, as an undoubted fact, that the preference which Germany has obtained here over Great Britain as regards railway bridges and other railway material is mainly owing to the existence of this metric classification."

I have in my hand two of the most recent reports, and I will therefore omit several of the older ones which have been published. The Consul-General of Frankfort-on-Main, writing in July of last year, said—

> "The advantages which would accrue to the exporters of British goods if the decimal system were adopted for the export, at least, of such goods as go to countries enjoying the decimal system of weights and measures, have been repeatedly demonstrated. Generally speaking, it is clear that the more intimately this system is connected with the habits and customs of a people, the more difficult will, in days of a very close competition, be the sale of goods differently weighed and measured."

The Consular Report on the trade of Sardinia, for the year 1902, contains the following entry—

> "The principal causes of the fall in trade in British industrial products are the heavy duties imposed on British industrial imports, the successful competition of other countries, especially of Germany and France, and the refusal of British manufacturers, traders, and merchants to use the decimal system of weights and measures for the sales here."

There is one feature connected with our export trade which is of especial interest—I refer to the drug market. According to Mr. Charles Umney, a manufacturing chemist, in his evidence before the Select Committee of 1895, London was almost entirely, at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, the drug market of the world; "and" he added, "it is so now" (*i.e.* 1895) "perhaps to the extent of 70 or 80 per cent." He said we were losing at that time every year because many of the drugs were sent to Amsterdam and Havre, and that this loss of trade was accounted for by our paying for imports according to slips made out in English weights and measures. But it is in the export trade of prepared medicines that the principle loss is found. Mr. Carteighe, president of the Pharmaceutical Society, says that the preparation of medicines from the raw drugs would be made in London on a much more extensive scale if the metrical weights and measures were permissible. Instead of that, there is a loss of business, for the South Americans go to Paris for their wholesale medicines. It should be borne in mind that our export trade to countries using the metrical system is considerably greater than that to countries not using it, including our colonies and India. Thus, taking the tables for 1900, we find—exports to the United States, 6 per cent. of our total exports; to other non-metrical countries, 9 per cent.; and to India and our colonies, 30 per cent., making a total of 45 per cent. So that to the metrical countries we export 55 per cent. But if this Bill becomes law, and our colonies and India follow our example, we shall have 85 per cent. value of trade with metrical countries, against 15 per cent. with non-metrical. There can be no doubt that even this small quantity would rapidly decrease and that very shortly the metric system would become universal.

My Lords, I will now very briefly describe the metric system which it is proposed to substitute for the existing weights and measures. The basis of the whole system is the metre, and we have already within this building an exact copy of the international standard. The metre is divided into 100 centimetres or 1,000 millimetres, and these subdivisions are used by different trades and businesses according to the degree of accuracy which may be required. One thousand metres make a kilometre, a convenient measure for roads and railways, being very approximately five-eighths of a mile. I say "or" because centimetres and millimetres are not used on the same plan or in the same specification. The measure of surface or area commences with a square metre; 10,000 square metres make a hectare, which is equal to about two-and-a-half acres. There is an intermediate measure called an are, containing 100 square metres, and 100 ares make a hectare. The are is a quarter of an acre. Cubic measure, or measure of capacity, whether for liquids or grain, has its basis in the litre. A litre is the cube of the tenth part of a metre, or, in other words, the cube of ten centimetres. One thousand litres make a cubic metre, while the one-thousandth part of a litre is a cubic centimetre. Here we have a simple co-ordination between measures of length and measures of capacity.

The system of weights is equally in agreement. The weight of a litre of water is a kilogramme, that is to say, one thousand grammes. A cubic centimetre of water weighs one gramme. For larger weights we have 1,000 kilogrammes equal to a ton—*i.e.*, a metric ton—and this is the weight of a cubic metre of water. See how admirably

Lord Belhaven and Stenton.

simple this is for the engineer, the builder, the manufacturer, and, in fact, for every business in life. You have only to know the specific gravity of any material—wood, metal or stone—and you know that a cubic metre of such material weighs that specific gravity in tons, or the cubic centimetre of any substance weighs its own specific gravity in grammes. There are several other multiples and decimal parts of metres, grammes, and litres in the metric nomenclature instituted by the French savants who evolved the system, but which are not required in the ordinary business of life; and we shall do well to follow the example of the Germans by the elimination of all unnecessary names, for these are not only unnecessary but in some cases confusing.

There is another advantage which is gained by the use of a decimal system. The slide rule is hardly known, at all events it is very little in use with us, but on the Continent it is in constant use for every sort of calculation. A sum in multiplication or division can be worked at a glance by means of this instrument, but it is quite useless where mixed quantities of feet and inches, or tons, cwts. and lbs. are used. A curious illustration of this occurred to me yesterday. I was in a mathematical instrument maker's shop in the Strand, and I noticed a slide rule. I asked if many were sold, and was told that hitherto very few, but that now there was a demand for them by electrical engineers. As electrical calculations are all on a decimal system, this is a strong confirmation of the above statement. In the same way accurate calculations can be made by logarithms with wonderful celerity where a decimal system prevails. If this Bill becomes law, as I greatly hope it will, I would strongly urge on the the Board of Trade, when publishing any fresh tables of weights and measures, to adopt the spelling of the words "meter," "liter," and "gram," used by both Americans and Germans, rather than the foreign-looking words of the French language which they employ in their last tables.

I will next refer to some of the objections which are raised to the measure now before your Lordships, with a view to showing how trifling they are compared with the advantages which I have quoted. I will begin with the objections stated by Ministers on several occasions to deputations which have urged this measure. They have said—but this was some years ago—that public opinion was not ripe for the change. The answer to that is the quantity and the quality of the petitions which I have presented to your Lordships' House this afternoon, and a list of which I have had printed and circulated to each of your Lordships. The list comprises some thirty town and city councils, some forty chambers of commerce, a very long string of retail dealers, trades unions representative of 289,000 workers, teachers' associations, inspectors of weights and measures, and a large number of individual signatures, bringing the total number of individuals represented to 333,000, whilst the population of the cities and towns whose councils have signed petitions is 2,800,000. There is also a large number still to come in, and I shall probably be able, in a week's time, to present nearly as great a number of supplementary petitions. This will, I hope, show that there is a very strong feeling in the country in favour of this Bill. It will be observed that the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce is not included in the list which I have circulated. I should like to explain this by saying that the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce have sent their petition to my noble friend Lord Avebury to be presented, and as that is one of the most important chambers of commerce in the Kingdom, I have thought it desirable to mention it separately.

The second objection, and a most reasonable one it is at first sight, is that the mass of uneducated people will be puzzled and irritated by an innovation which affects their ordinary habits in the sale and purchase of their every-day wants. My answer to that is that it has been done in every country on the continent of Europe, and in many other countries beyond, and that in ten days or a fortnight from the commencement of the change the new weights and measures have been understood, and, in a short time more, they have been so thoroughly appreciated that no desire is shown to go back to the old ones. I could read to your Lordships a number of replies from His Majesty's representatives in foreign countries as to the ease with which the change was made, but I think it will be sufficient if I say that the replies were to the effect that the change was made without much difficulty, although some countries were more rapid in adopting it than others; that there had never been any desire to return to the old system, and that the adoption of metric weights and measures had assisted the development of trade. Switzerland commenced to use the metric system eighteen months from the passing of the law. There was no great difficulty found there in the towns, but it was some time before it was adopted in remote country places. In Germany it was adopted more quickly than anywhere else. Two years and one month were allowed, and the interval thus granted was sufficient to insure the adoption of the new system in all details; it was an accomplished fact by the day named. There is no desire to go back to to the old system, and the change has contributed to a rise of German trade and commerce, foreign trade deriving much benefit. If this Bill should become law, although there is no provision in it to that effect, it might be desirable, at the time the Act comes into force, to exhibit in all shops simple tables easily understood showing the practical equivalents of old and new measures suitable to the special trade carried on there. This might be left to the local authorities to see to, or it might be embodied in the Act.

There may, again, be others who do not come under the category of uneducated, but who, from a dislike to mental effort, would oppose the use of weights and measures to which they are not accustomed, and would prefer to muddle on with a system described by the Prime Minister as "arbitrary, perverse, and utterly irrational." To these I would reply that the metric system is bound to be adopted sooner or later, and that personal inconvenience for a few days should not be allowed to interfere with a measure calculated to promote the trade and prosperity of the country. A third objection is that the change would throw upon traders in general, and especially on the small trader, an expense which it would be unfair to saddle them with. The reply to this is, that the small village shopkeeper who uses a 7 lb. set of iron weights would obtain new ones for about half-a-crown, while those using a 7 lb. set of brass weights would be put to the expense of about 16s. over and above the value which would be given for the obsolete weights. When it comes to large houses of business, or to railway companies and factories, the saving effected by the simplification of accounts on the metric system will quickly compensate for any expense on weights and weighing machines, or in re-placing mile-posts with those marking kilometers.

I have heard another objection made, that the full benefit of the change to metric weights and measures will not be obtained until we adopt a decimal coinage. My Lords, it is true that the system will not be perfect until such is the case; but there are many more objectors to altering the currency than there are to changing weights and measures. Besides, it would be putting an excessive strain upon the minds of the less well-educated to make the double change at one time, and therefore we have confined ourselves in this Bill to weights and measures and have not touched upon the coinage question. Weights and measures are unquestionably the more important matter of the two.

In conclusion, I will briefly examine the clauses of the Bill. Clause 1 provides that as from the 5th day of April, 1906, or such later date as His Majesty may, by Order in Council, fix, the metric standards of weights and measures shall respectively be deemed to be the Imperial standards in substitution for the existing standards. The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Clauses are purely technical; Clause 5 deals with the verification of Parliamentary copies of substituted Imperial standards. Clause 6 is the first important clause, and it makes it compulsory that every deed, contract, bargain, sale, or agreement relating to weights or measures made in the United Kingdom, or entered into after the commencement of this Act, shall be made or entered into in terms of the metric system of weights and measures, and that any such document made in terms of any other system shall be void and of no effect. Clause 7 provides that all references contained in any Act of Parliament in force at the commencement of this

Act, or passed thereafter, to the Imperial weights or measures now in force, shall be deemed to be and construed as references to the respective equivalents in the metric system. The remaining clauses are purely formal. I have endeavoured to explain what the old system is and the new one which is proposed, and also the disadvantages of the old system and the great advantages of the new. I can only hope that your Lordships will recognise how important this matter is to the trade of the country, and that in order to facilitate that trade you will give it your support. Above all, I would appeal to His Majesty's Government to let the measure pass as quickly as possible through this House in order that it may be thoroughly ventilated and an opportunity given for the opinion of the country to be ascertained on the subject. I beg to move.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Belhaven and Stenton.*)

*LORD COLCHESTER: My Lords, as I am one of the only few survivors, if any, of the Standards Commission of 1870 which went fully into this question, I would venture to ask whether the time has really come for taking the very much larger step proposed by the noble Lord. This is a measure which will not only affect one class of business or one class of traders — it is a measure which will affect the daily life of almost everyone. The metric system has been made permissive, and the only question is whether the time has come for making it absolutely compulsory. I recognise all the arguments in its favour as regards the conduct of business on a large scale, especially foreign trade; but I doubt whether it would be wise, at the present moment, to sweep away entirely the existing law and enforce the use of the metric system alike upon those who find it convenient and those who do not. We have to consider the 45 per cent. of our trade with countries where the metric system is not yet adopted; for whatever disadvantage we are placed at with regard to countries using the metric system, yet with regard to 45 per cent. of our trade we have the advantage over our competitors who use the metric system. I think those advantages largely compensate us for the disadvantages we experience in regard to the other 55 per cent. There is, at any rate, only a slight balance of disadvantage. We have to consider those engaged in small transactions as well as those engaged in large ones, and the question is whether we should force this system upon those who have very little or nothing to do with foreign trade or with countries where the metric system is in use. Those who wish to use the metric system in order to facilitate their business are quite entitled to do so. The noble Lord stated that when once this system was introduced it would be very easy to displace local weights which are of no legal value; but I venture to think, from the experience of France and some parts of the United States, where the *livre* as a measure and the *sou* as a price are still in use, where strange fractional prices continue as equivalents of those under the old system, that the adoption of the metric system will not be so easy as the noble Lord imagines. It will be very difficult to displace existing weights or to get rid altogether of the existing system. As to the educational side of the question, I do not wish to dispute the opinions which the noble Lord quoted, of persons engaged in education, but one would have thought that it would have been advantageous for children to be taught the two systems. At present it is open to anyone who finds this a convenient method, to use the metric system, and to my mind there is no necessity to go further. I do not think it should be imposed compulsorily upon those who do not desire it; but if the system is made compulsory, then I think there should be a longer interval than the two years proposed by the Bill before the change becomes effective.

*LORD KELVIN: My Lords, we are losing enormously every year, as has been amply proved in the admirable speech of my noble friend in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, by dilatory tactics such as has been suggested. We have had nine years of permission to use the metric system without thereby rendering ourselves liable to punishment for a breach of the law, and experience has proved that the change from the system that has been so long in use in this country to a new system cannot be made over the whole country voluntarily. It is a case for compulsion, and I think the Legislature will be thanked by the country for having applied compulsion. Of the objections raised against the definite and compulsory introduction of the metric system, there is not one to which I attach the smallest weight. I understand that the noble Lord who spoke last does not disapprove of the metric system. [Lord COLCHESTER nodded assent.] I am glad that I can accept the noble Lord as a supporter of the principle of this Bill, but I would ask him to consider how much we should lose by a single year more of waiting. We sometimes regard this country as the wisest in the whole world, and think that we are right in everything we do and that the rest of the civilised world who differ from us are entirely wrong. I do not think we should take up that position at all. I think we may with advantage follow the example of other countries with regard to the compulsory adoption of the metric system. In Germany, France, and Italy, no inconvenience has resulted from the introduction of the metric system, and there has never been such a thing as a complaint. I am astonished at the shortness of time in which the system was adopted in Germany. The change there occupied only two years. I have in my hand a statement by Sir William Ramsay, in which he wrote—

> "I was in Germany during the change there; it gave no trouble whatever and was recognised within a week."

I believe that whatever difficulty may be caused in shops, in factories, or in engineering establishments, great or small, will, in a fortnight's or a month's time, be far more than compensated for by the diminution of labour which the change will produce. While we are grateful to France for having given us the metric system, while we see France, Germany, Italy, and Austria rejoicing in the use of it, and benefiting every day by the use of it, it is somewhat interesting to know that, after all, the decimal system, worked out by the French philosophers, originated in England. In a letter dated 14th November, 1783, James Watt laid down a plan which was in all respects the system adopted by the French philosophers seven years later, which the French Government suggested to the King of England as a system that might be adopted by international agreement. James Watt's objects were to secure uniformity and to establish a mode of division which should be convenient as long as decimal arithmetic lasted. He curiously anticipated Herbert Spencer's objection to the metric system, which was that it ought to be duodecimal? If we had six fingers on each hand, then duodecimal subdivision might be convenient. In point of fact, decimal arithmetic is a thing which we may consider is absolutely settled, and there should be no complicated subdivisions whatever. Just think of the subdivisions we have in the troy pound, which is 5,760 grains: the avoirdupois pound is 7,000 grains—the troy ounce and the avoirdupois ounce differing so considerably as to render a very serious accident possible. My noble friend did not refer to another denomination in which the difference is still greater. The avoirdupois drachm is $27\frac{11}{32}$ grains, whilst the apothecaries' drachm is 60 grains. I speak feelingly with regard to that difference. Some forty-four years ago there existed an epidemic which Lord Palmerston called a "rifle fever." I was myself afflicted with the disease; so much so, that I had the honour of being appointed to the captaincy of the 77th Company of the Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers, and I made numerous experiments in my laboratory on rifles. While experimenting I was very nearly blown up, in which event I should not have been here to-day supporting the adoption of the metric system. Two and a quarter drachms was the proper weight, but I had weighed out two and a quarter drachms of sixty grains. I thought it appeared rather large. I looked up the matter and discovered the mistake just in time to prevent the rifle exploding and killing me. I have a strong recollection of my feelings as to the danger arising owing to the resemblance in name of two weights drawn from different tables. I feel that the case is proved up to the hilt. I hope that the Bill will be allowed to pass the Second Reading, and that it will not be referred to a Select Committee, which might involve a year's delay. I hope it will be sent forward with full pressure to the other House, 333 Members of which have declared themselves in favour of it and ready to support it. I urge that course because I am convinced that its final passing into law would be a tremendous gain to the British people.

LORD WOLVERTON: My Lords, we have listened to two very interesting speeches, and, speaking for myself, I am very much in favour of the Bill, and congratulate the noble Lord on the success he has met with in the country. I am not, however, here to speak for myself but to explain the attitude of His Majesty's Government on this question. Mr. Balfour, addressing a deputation on 21st November, 1895, said that if he might express his own opinion upon the merits of the case, there could be no doubt whatever that the judgment of the whole civilised world, not excluding the countries which still adhered to the antiquated system under which we suffered, had long decided that the metric system was the only rational system. Scientific men in this country, said Mr. Balfour, had long been driven to use it in their writings and in their calculations, and, if he might so express it, to think in it—to think out the problems in which they dealt in the system which we owed to the ingenuity of the French. I am afraid, my Lords, after what has been said by the noble Lord who has just spoken, the Prime Minister was not correct in that latter statement, and that we can claim that the metric system originated in this country. I have quoted the words used by the Prime Minister in the year 1895, and I do not think that his attitude on the subject has changed since then. On behalf of His Majesty's Government I shall place no obstacle in the way of the Second Reading of the Bill. The Government think, however, that in view of the great importance and magnitude of the question it should be referred to a Select Committee of your Lordships' House. It seems to me that we could find in this House a fitting tribunal before whom all this evidence could come, and I believe that the evidence brought before that Select Committee would have a remarkable influence upon this question in the country. Whilst assenting to the Second Reading of the Bill, the Government reserve the right to amend it at a later stage.

I will place before your Lordships a few arguments to show that it is desirable that this Bill should go before a Select Committee. In the Memorandum which accompanies the Bill it will be noticed that there is a reference to the Conference of Colonial Premiers in this country and to the opinion they expressed in favour of the metric system; but, as I understand from a note taken of the proceedings at that time, there was no strong expression of opinion for compulsion in the adoption of the metric system. At present there are eighty different denominations represented by 155 different kinds of weights and measures. Under the Bill which the noble Lord has introduced these will be reduced to thirty denominations represented by fifty-three different kinds of weights and measures. Though there is thereby a great gain, there remains some difficulties to cope with. In the first place, it is doubtful whether the preliminary period of two years—although it may be extended by Order in Council—is long enough for the steps which will have to be taken to prepare for the change. The provisions of Clauses 7 and 8, substituting in Acts of Parliament, by-laws, agreements, contracts, etc., the metric equivalents for the Imperial weights and measures do not attempt to face the real difficulty and would lead to some curious results. As an example, a railway maximum rate of so much per ton per mile would become the same amount per 1,016 kilos per 1·6093 kilometers, rather difficult figures to deal with if a trader was desiring to ascertain whether a railway company was overcharging him. In this connection it is perhaps for consideration whether the existing linear measures might not be conveniently retained for some purposes, such as measurements of distance, sale of land, etc. Such retention would, for instance, much simplify the conversion of railway rates for ordinary merchandise. The proposal of the Bill would in any legislation relating to the gallon substitute for gallon 4·5459631 litres, and on such figures the maximum cost of the carriage of milk by passenger train would have to be worked out. The cubic foot on which the price of gas depends would become 0·028317 cubic metres; such examples could be multiplied indefinitely.

Other matters which will require dealing with are not referred to at all in the Bill. Provision is necessary for administration in some matters which cannot be left to the local authority, such as the calling in of the existing weights and measures used in the trade. If not so called in, their use would undoubtedly be continued and the object of the Bill to some extent defeated. Another matter of interest is the nomenclature to be adopted when the metric weights and measures come into general use. At present the people using the system are satisfied, no doubt, with the French nomenclature, but it is for consideration whether some method more easily to be understood by the people at large of distinguishing between the different measures and weights could be devised. That seems to me essentially a matter for a Select Committee of your Lordships' House. They will be able to deal with that question with knowledge, and I am sure they would be able to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion which would very much shorten the language at present in use. On the understanding that the Bill is referred to a Select Committee His Majesty's Government offer no opposition to the Second Reading.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I do not propose to enter at length into this interesting but difficult subject. I feel that the thanks of the House are due to the noble Lord who introduced the Bill for his clear and full statement of the subject, and to the noble and scientific Lord (Lord Kelvin) who has given so much interesting information to your Lordships. I am not going into the whole matter, but I should like to say how strongly I feel the great desirability of this Bill going forward. I rejoice to hear from the noble Lord who represents the Board of Trade in this House, that His Majesty's Government do not intend to oppose the Second Reading. I rejoice at that exceedingly; but I do not, I confess, approve of the suggestion which the noble Lord has made of referring the Bill to a Select Committee. It is very necessary at times to refer matters to Select Committees when they have not been probed and examined to a very great extent, but that is not the case here. I have in my hand a very full and able Report by a Committee which sat in 1895, over whom a very distinguished man of science—Sir Henry Roscoe—presided. They went very fully into the whole matter, and I venture to say that nearly every point on which information can be desired has been fully investigated and reported upon in that Report. I venture to think that it is the duty of an Executive Government to read and digest Reports of that kind when dealing with a Bill presented to the House, and, when they have done that, it is their business to frame any Amendments which they think necessary. Why should they shift the responsibility of dealing with a matter of this kind on to a Committee? I maintain that His Majesty's Government are bound to deal with this themselves, and should not refer it to a Select Committee.

The noble Lord instanced one or two cases where there would be considerable difficulty. I fully admit that, and I am sure the two noble Lords who are responsible for the Bill will admit that the introduction of this great measure could not take place without very great difficulty being occasioned in the country. You will disorganise a great many trades; you will put a great many people to great inconvenience, by changing the whole system of shopping and bargaining in the country; but that has been overcome elsewhere, particularly in Germany. In that country the whole system was changed without any difficulty. I am afraid we often say, and say with some truth, that the Germans are a much better educated people than ourselves; but I will not for a moment believe that the people of this country are so uneducated that they will be behind the Germans in understanding a change which will conduce so much to the benefit of the country. The noble Lord said there would be difficulty with regard to railway rates. I agree that in every single trade there would be a difficulty of some kind. The question is, Is the change so important that it justifies dislocating all those trades and making them readjust their arrangements? From all I know, I should answer most distinctly that the benefits will be so great to our international trade, to our home trade, and to education, that this change is desirable, and will in the end be of immense benefit to the country. The noble Lord referred to the Conference of Colonial Premiers and stated that at that Conference nothing was said about compulsion.

LORD WOLVERTON: I stated that they did not make a great mark of compulsion; they did not emphasise it.

*EARL SPENCER: I venture to say that without compulsion we shall remain exactly in the position in which we are now. I believe that compulsion, in this matter, is absolutely essential, and, wherever the change has been compulsorily adopted, it has been attended with great advantages. There will be other opportunities of discussing this matter, and I shall not delay the House further upon it to-night. I cannot help expressing the hope, however, that His Majesty's Government will not think it necessary to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. There is ample material for decision, and I think the Government may have sufficient confidence in the noble Lord, and in his colleagues at the Board of Trade, that they can frame what Amendments are necessary without the necessity of delaying the Bill by sending it upstairs to a Select Committee.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, we on these Benches desire to associate ourselves with what the noble Earl has said as to the thanks which are due by this House to the two noble Lords who have introduced this Bill, and by their speeches have made interesting a most important, but, at the same time, dry and intricate, subject. I feel sure they will not be dissatisfied with the reception which their proposals have received. We are all agreed that the existing system—if, indeed, it is worthy of the name of a system—is one to which overwhelming objections can be urged. It is distracting to learners and obstructive to trade, home and foreign, and it is probably advantageous to no one, unless it be to the dishonest trader, who is able to profit by the confusion which prevails.

I will not attempt to follow the two noble Lords into the instances which they gave us of the complication and inconvenience of our various kinds of weights and measures. We have all of us on occasions suffered from the state of things which prevails. But I am tempted to cap the story which was told by the noble and erudite Lord on the Back Benches. He mentioned how he was very nearly disabled by a serious accident because a rifle upon which he was experimenting had been wrongly charged owing to the resemblance between two different dimensions of weight taken from different tables. My anecdote is drawn from a more prosaic source. Not long ago a friend of mine was travelling on the Continent, and being indisposed sent a prescription given him by his English doctor to be made up by a local druggist. In due time a box of pills was delivered to him. My friend said they were of the size of small marbles, and he was so intimidated by their appearance that he decided not to adopt the remedy. Very soon the chemist appeared in a state of intense emotion, and stated that his assistant, who had made up the pills, did not know the difference between a grain and a gramme, and thought that the latter was the proper weight to be used, with the result that each of those torpedoes contained about 30 grains of calomel, which I am told is considerably more than a grown man's dose.

The noble Lord opposite has taken us to task for proposing to send this Bill to a Select Committee. I do not think his objection is well-founded. It is true that in 1895 a Select Committee of the House of Commons dealt, not with a Bill, but with the subject generally. Their Report is a very short one, and I hope I shall not be thought disrespectful if I say that it seems to me a somewhat perfunctory treatment of a difficult subject. My noble friend who spoke for the Government has moreover made it clear that the Bill on the Table contains a number of provisions which require very careful and minute consideration, and I submit that a Select Committee is the proper body for that task. I certainly prefer that course to the alternative of the noble Earl opposite, who suggested that the proper duty of the Government was to pass its time reading and digesting Blue-books. That, indeed, would be an unhappy aggravation of our lot. I am sure that if the Bill is sent to a Select Committee no undue delay will occur, and that it will stand a greater chance of success if it is treated in that manner.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I desire to associate myself with all that has fallen from my noble friend Earl Spencer, except his alarming definition of the functions of the Executive Government, which, I think, he gave expression to at a moment of inadvertence. I cannot find in the arguments brought forward by the Government any support for the course they recommend. Of course, there are difficulties. But this is one of the many cases in which you will not evade your difficulties by procrastination. All that needs to be inquired into in this matter is contained in the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1895. The noble Marquess thinks that that was a cursory examination of the subject. Well, the Blue-book ought to be ample enough even for those who discharge the functions of the Executive Government. I admit that the people of this country are, in these matters, extremely conservative and slow to adopt changes. But when we recollect that nearly two centuries ago they faced the difficulty of adopting a totally new calendar, I do think there will be the trouble the noble Marquess apprehends in inducing them to accept this change in weights and measures unless the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. I never saw a greater distinction between the human being and the official being than was displayed by the noble Lord who represents the Government. We all know that there is a difference between the two beings, but I do not think I ever saw it so clearly illustrated as by the noble Lord. "As an individual," said the noble Lord, "I am entirely with the mover and seconder of the Bill; but as an official I am desired by the Government to announce the policy which they intend to adopt in this matter." But this is one of the many cases in life in which it is best to grasp your nettle. You will not get rid of the difficulties in this matter, or avoid the temporary disadvantages of the change, by the appointment of any number of Select Committees; and, for my part—without desiring to introduce any controversial question—I attach so much importance to this change that I believe, if you carry it out, it will be of infinitely more advantage to the commerce of the country than all the fiscal remedies proposed by official or non-official members of the Government.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): My Lords, if the noble Earl will allow me to say so, I think he has failed at a point where failure is the last thing I should have expected of him. He has not quite grasped the point of the Motion which my noble friend proposes to make. He speaks of the reference of this Bill, after it has been read a second time, to a Select Committee as a dilatory proposal. But is it? When the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee they did not appoint it to deal with a Bill. That Select Committee dealt with the policy. We do not propose that the Committee of your Lordships' House should deal with the policy, but with the Bill. In dealing with the Bill the Select Committee of your Lordships' House will have the whole work of the House of Commons' Committee at its disposal, as well as other evidence if it chooses to take it, for I understand that a Select Committee has full discretionary powers in that matter. It will serve the function of putting this Bill through the Committee of your Lordships' House in its most convenient form. That is why the Motion is submitted, and it is on those grounds that I ask your Lordships to accept the Government's proposal.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Are there any points which have been suggested by the representative of the Board of Trade that cannot perfectly well be dealt with in Committee of the Whole House just in the same way as other Bills are dealt with?

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: It is a matter of opinion; but I think a Select Committee is the simplest and most effective way of dealing with the Bill.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND: My Lords, if the Bill is to be referred to a Select Committee, and that Committee is not to call witnesses, I see no reason why it should not go to the Committee. But if, on the other hand, the Bill and the subject are both to be sent to the Select Committee and witnesses are to be called, then I do see inconvenience and delay in such a course. As I understand it, the Government propose simply to send the Bill to the Committee.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I think it is quite clear, from the language which has been used from the Front Bench opposite, that the Government are entirely in favour of this Bill and desire to see it pass into law. With that view they have proposed that the Bill should go to a Select Committeee, not for the purpose of taking evidence with regard to the Bill, but for the purpose of examining its provisions, making alterations in its details, and so enabling it more easily to pass through the Committee stage in this House and in Grand Committee. It is all very well to say that, by that course, the passage of the Bill into law is not endangered. Noble Lords opposite know as well as I do that if a Bill in the hands of a private Member is to pass through the House of Commons it must get to that House in good time, otherwise it is certain to be shut out. I can offer a suggestion to the Government which I hope they will accept, as it will be the best way of proving that they are really in earnest in their desire that the Bill should pass. It is that the Bill should go to a Select Committee on the conditions that have been stated, and that after the Bill has returned to, and passed through the other stages of, your Lordships' House, then the Government should make it a Government Bill in the House of Commons.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION.

*LORD NEWTON: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the Resolution adopted by this House on 25th May last year with regard to the Parliamentary session, and to ask His Majesty's Government whether they propose to take any steps with reference to it. Lest there should be any doubt as to the Motion which is referred to in the notice, I may as well explain that the Motion was an attempt on my part to induce Parliament, and, incidentally, society to adopt more reasonable habits, and to conform, in short, to the usual practices of civilised nations by doing such work as we are called upon to do, preferably in the winter to the months of July and August. Although I was temporarily, perhaps I ought to say momentarily, successful in this endeavour, and although I succeeded in obtaining the support of the noble Duke who at that time led this House, I refrained, with great consideration, from pressing the noble Duke on the subject, because I felt some doubt in my own mind as to whether he would continue in this office, and those apprehensions have unfortunately been justified. Now we are nominally, at all events, at the beginning of another session—I say nominally because I have very little doubt that, in about a fortnight's time, we shall be adjourning indefinitely because we have nothing to do. This being the case, it appears to me that it is time to ask whether anything is going to be done with reference to the Motion adopted by the House.

I have not the smallest intention of repeating the arguments which I advanced last year. They were apparently considered satisfactory, and I own that I do not think that was at all surprising, as I contend they were founded upon good sense. Parliament met last year about the middle of February. This House adjourned, I think, towards the end of March. We practically did not sit at all during April; we sat during a portion of May; we adjourned during a portion of May and June; and we met again towards the middle of June, and until the month of August we were occupied in debating matters of a more or less abstract description and in discussions often of a somewhat desultory character. It was not until August that we had the usual influx of Bills from the Commons, and they were to use an expression which is much in favour with the Front Bench, "dumped" down on this House, some of them in a somewhat raw and unfinished condition.

There was only one Bill of really first-class importance last session—namely, the Irish Land Bill. That Bill made its first effective appearance here on 3rd August, upon which day the Second Reading was taken. On 6th August we entered upon the Committee stage; on the first night we wrestled with the technicalities of the Bill until a disreputable hour so far as we are concerned. On 7th August the discussion was continued, and the Committee stage was brought to an end at a late hour in the evening. I want to call particular attention to what occurred on this evening. When we had disposed of the Irish Land Bill we set to work and considered a Fertilisers and Food Stuffs Bill. We then took the Second Reading of the Naval Works Bill, which was introduced in a somewhat lengthy speech by the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty. We then embarked upon the Post Office Sites Bill and passed it through Committee. We then took the Second Reading of the Employment of Children Bill — a fairly important measure, which was introduced in an equally long speech by the noble Lord who represents the Home Office; and after that we proceeded to the consideration of the Ireland Development Bill, whatever that may be. Having disposed of that, a noble Lord on this side of the House called attention to the grievances of reserve officers. I had a grievance myself which I was anxious to air against my noble friend the Foreign Secretary, and I always look back upon that night with a feeling of resentment, because, owing to the congested state of the business, I was able to make no impression on my noble friend, when my turn came, and he therefore escaped scot free. This is an instance of the amount of work we crowd into an August day, or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say, an August evening. 7th August was a Friday. On the following Monday—10th August—we embarked upon a large number of Bills—seven or eight altogether. On 11th August the Irish Land Bill was read a third time and on 12th August the Motor Car Bill was disposed of. On 13th August the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition put a series of conundrums to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, embracing all those questions which presumbly he had forgotten to ask at an earlier period of the session; and on 14th August Parliament was prorogued.

To resume for a moment fiscal phraseology I feel inclined to ask—How much longer are we going to take this lying down? The noble Earl on the Cross Benches, Lord Rosebery, whose support I was fortunate enough to obtain, stated that in the month of August this House was annually converted into a dustheap, and he made a bold and drastic suggestion that the House of Lords should go on strike. Not being possessed of the courage and enterprise of the noble Earl I do not advocate such drastic measures. I shudder to contemplate what grave constitutional difficulties would arise if we took that course; but I have a much more conciliatory proposal which I beg to suggest to the noble Marquess. I recognise, myself, as everybody else must do, that we cannot be the sole judges in this matter, and that we cannot consult our own convenience only. It is perfectly obvious that we cannot carry out any change unless we can get the House of Commons to agree with us. What I therefore suggest to my noble friend is this: That he should use his influence with the present Leader of the House of Commons, whoever he may be, and induce him to give facilities for a discussion on a Motion in similar terms to that which has been adopted by this House. We shall then ascertain what the opinion of the House of Commons is upon this question. There is really no reason why a few hours should not be given to the discussion of this subject in the House of Commons, because at this time of the year that House has some spare time on its hands.

If the proposal is accepted—and I personally entertain a strong belief that it only requires to be talked about sufficiently in order to be adopted, and that the House of Commons will find that it suits their convenience as much as it does ours—well and good; if, on the other hand, they reject it, there is an end, at all events for the time being, of the matter. But what I do respectfully desire to impress upon the noble Marquess is that it really is necessary that something should be done, because if we are going airily to pass Resolutions, by large majorities, of this character and take no action upon them, we are really justifying the statement — the somewhat libellous statement—which is made about us, that we are little better than a collection of persons of more or less social eminence who meet here for the purpose of airing their individual opinions.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I had not the advantage of being in your Lordships' House last year when my noble friend introduced this subject, but I had an opportunity of reading the statement which he made, and I am bound to say that I thought his arguments were of the most convincing kind. At any rate, if he had desired again to take the sense of your Lordships' House, I certainly should have voted with him. My noble friend, I think, rests his case upon the true ground. We hear a great many arguments in favour of an earlier prorogation of Parliament which do not appeal very much to us. I suppose we would all of us like to see more of the country at a time when the country is at its best; but London, after all, is not a very intolerable place even in the dog days, and we can scarely, I think, on grounds of private convenience, ask to have the customs of Parliament changed. Nor am I greatly impressed by the argument connected with field sports which is sometimes addressed to us. I agree with what was said as to this last year by Lord Ribblesdale: even with an autumn session there would be plenty of opportunities for those who wished to pursue either a sporting life diversified by politics, or a political life diversified by sport. The real reason, it seems to me, for a change of this kind is that which my noble friend has stated—I mean the fact that the present system does not enable the House of Lords to perform adequately and efficiently the duties which belong to it under our Constitutional system.

I have now for a great number of years watched events in this House; and I am bound to say it seems to me almost a scandal that, year after year, important matters of business should be crowded before us in the dying moments of the session, when we are all of us more or less exhausted, and when it is quite impossible for this House either to consider, as it should consider, the Amendments which may have been introduced in any measure in the other House of Parliament during the later stages of its progress, or even those Amendments which are put upon the Paper by Members of your Lordships' House. The result, I am afraid, is that a great deal of our legislative work is very badly done, and that we not infrequently place upon the Statute-book, as we certainly did last year in the case of the Irish Land Bill, measures which in some important respects do not carry out the intentions of their framers. Therefore, my Lords, I am quite disposed to view favourably the proposal of my noble friend. Probably the most serious thing that can be said against it is this, that it will add considerably to the troubles of Ministers and their subordinates during the winter months, which is the season of the year when measures should be carefully matured, and there is no doubt that work of that kind cannot be carried on so satisfactorily if business is liable to all those interruptions which are inseparable from the session of Parliament.

But, my Lords, as I said a moment ago, I wish nothing but well to my noble friend's proposal, and if I could advance it in any way I should be glad to do so. The noble Duke who spoke last year on behalf of the Government made it perfectly clear that the question was one in which the other House of Parliament had not only an equal interest with our House, but, as he put it, a preponderating interest, and my noble friend evidently feels that we have to reckon with the House of Commons in this matter. I will, however, gladly impart to the Prime Minister what has been said by my noble friend, and I have no doubt my right hon. friend will receive the communication with the respect to which it is entitled, considering the quarter from which it emanates. But whether it will be possible to find time in the House of Commons for a debate upon a point of this kind is a question which it is impossible for me to answer.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, it seems to me absolutely impossible that we can meet the noble Lord's point by any arrangement that may be made. I understand the noble Lord's point to be that this House is badly treated in having to deal at the end of the session with all the measures which come up to it from the House of Commons. Whatever arrangement may be made with regard to the sittings of Parliament the same thing will occur; the earlier portion of the session will always be taken up in the House of Commons by financial matters and with business which does not advance the legislation of the session very much. The only remedy, it seems to me, which will meet the noble Lord's objection is that the Government of the day should introduce some of their more important measures in this House, and let your Lordships have the opportunity of having the first "go" at them. To propose any such thing is rather a counsel of perfection. I am afraid that no Government of any complexion is likely to take that course. The House of Commons, I think, will always insist on having the main measures brought before them first, and as a great many of the measures are in their very nature of a financial character it is imperative that they should be first introduced into the other House. I am afraid, therefore, that the noble Lord's proposal is not likely to lead to the result he desires.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: My Lords, I am afraid we do not get much assistance from my noble friend who has just sat down. I do not think I ever remember a session in which it was not proposed to the Government that they should introduce some of their important measures in this House. I am a little disappointed that the Government have not adopted their favourite remedy of a Select Committee to consider this question. My noble friend Lord Newton has rather pointedly alluded to the ironical proposition I made last year that the House of Lords should go out on strike. I am disposed to reconsider that proposal from the experience we had last year. If the House of Commons is to be conducted on the principles on which it was conducted last year, I see great value in the House of Lords sitting continuously and *pari passu* with the House of Commons, as being the only arena for free discussion which remains to us in this country; for your Lordships will remember that this House was the only House in which the policy of His Majesty's Government was allowed to be discussed during the whole of last session. The Government, which is the guardian of the privileges of this House, and which does not simply regard it as the only arena for free discussion left to us, has, I am afraid, treated a solemn Resolution of this House, passed by an adequate majority, with some neglect. It was passed very nearly a year ago, and I am sorry to learn, from what has fallen from the noble Marquess, that the Government have taken no proceedings on that Resolution and have allowed it to fall entirely into abeyance. What worse thing could be said against an advanced Liberal Government than that they had disregarded altogether a Resolution of this House, and treated it as waste paper? I confess that I find myself once more, as I have sometimes found myself, to my astonishment, of late years, the guardian of the privileges of this House, the asserter of the dignity of this House; and I should have been glad if, simply out of regard for those great objects, the Government had thought well to refer this matter to a Select Committee.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: There has always seemed to me one suggestion for remedying the undoubted evils from which we suffer which never seems to receive sufficient consideration. I think there are very great difficulties in securing the object which the noble Lord has in view by meeting earlier in the year and promising not to sit later. My belief is that, however early you meet, you will sit on to that period of the year when long stereotyped custom makes it pleasant to leave the Metropolis. But I would offer one suggestion which, I think, would have the result of restoring a great deal of the privileges of this House, add very greatly to the convenience of everybody concerned, and in no way prejudice the public interest. It is that in regard, at any rate, to some of the Bills which come up from the House of Commons we should carry them over to a subsequent session. The prejudice against that proposal is not altogether wise. In the case of private measures, Bills are sometimes carried over from one Parliament to another, and there is no abstract constitutional difficulty in adopting the course I have suggested in regard to those public Bills which are not of first-class importance.

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, with the permission of the House, I wish to say a very few words in reply to the observations of Lord Tweedmouth. His contention was that, whatever happened, we should get these Bills at the fag end of the session. My objection is that at present we get them up in August, when no one remains in town. If the session ended in December there would be no difficulty in securing an adequate attendance of Peers.

SEA FISHERIES BILL.

The following Lords were named of the Select Committee—

M. Abercorn. (*D. Abercorn.*)
E. Onslow.
E. Yarborough.
L. Meldrum. (*M. Huntly.*)
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Northbourne.
L. Heneage.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Select Committee appointed: the Lords following with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee—

D. Northumberland.
M. Cholmondeley.
M. Ripon.
M. Breadalbane.
E. Clarendon. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Chesterfield.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Spencer.
E. Mount Edgcumbe.
E. Belmore.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. de Montalt.
E. Cranbrook.
E. Ancaster.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
V. Hampden.
V. Cross.
V. Peel.
V. Knutsford.
V. Churchill.
L. Windsor.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Colchester.
L. Rosebery. (*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Belper.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Welby.
L. Burghclere.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 23rd February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Bexhill Water and Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Marylebone Chapels (St. James, Westmoreland Street). Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Rotherham Corporation Bill; Torquay Tramways Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [22nd February], "That the Committee of Selection do nominate a Committee, not exceeding eleven Members, to be called the Police and Sanitary Committee, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the provisions of the general Law."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

Question again proposed.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said it was necessary he should reply to some observations made by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham, on the previous day, in regard to the appointment of this Committee, and the part it took with respect to the action of municipal corporations and local authorities. Many hon. Members on the Government Benches were of opinion that municipalities should be crushed, while those of the Opposition mostly thought with himself that the Committee had rather erred in the direction of preventing these bodies acting freely on the views of the local inhabitants The opinions of the hon. Members in favour of restricting the grant of powers were rather against those to which he was giving expression. However, he took it that the hon. Member was not opposed to municipal trading. He had cited two cases in which police powers given in the 1886 Parliament had led to debate in that House, but he had admitted that the objection to which they gave rise had not arisen in regard to later Acts. It was therefore not necessary to go into that matter. There was a great deal to be said on both sides of the question, but he wished it to be understood that the House generally must not be taken as concurring in the suggestion that local authorities were going too far in these matters.

Mr. HALSEY (Hertfordshire, Watford), as Chairman of the Committee of Selection, said they took the greatest care in choosing members for this particular Committee and he believed that the manner in which it did its work met with the approbation of the House. He agreed with the hon. Member that it would be desirable that the declaration he referred to of absence of persona interest in the business to be done by the Committee should be made by the members in the same way as was done by members of all Committees on Private Bills, but he feared that that would involve a very complicated alteration of Standing Orders. He wished to take that opportunity of bearing testimony to the admirable manner in which the Committee had done its work—work which did not come before the public in any way, but which was more severe than that of Private Bill Committees, and which involved great personal inconvenience.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 150 and 173A apply to all such Bills.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Four be the quorum of the Committee.

Ordered, That if the Committee shall report to the Committee of Selection that any clauses of any Bill referred to them (other than clauses containing police and sanitary regulations) are such, as having regard to the terms of reference, it is not in their opinion necessary or advisable for them to deal with, the Committee of Selection shall thereupon refer the Bill to a Select Committee, who shall consider those clauses and so much of the Preamble of the Bill as relates thereto, and shall determine the expenditure (if any) to be authorised in respect of the parts of the Bill referred to them. That the Committee shall deal with the remaining clauses of such Bill, and so much of the Preamble as relates thereto, and shall determine the period and mode of repayment of any money authorised by the Select Committee to be borrowed and shall report the whole Bill to the House, stating in their report what parts of the Bill have been considered by each Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to sit as two Committees, and in that event to apportion the Bills referred to the Committee between the two Committees, each of which shall have the full powers of, and be subject to the instructions which apply to, the undivided Committee, and that Three be the quorum of each of the two Committees.—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

PETITIONS.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES IN IRELAND.

Petition from Newry, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

JURORS' EXPENSES BILL.

Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCE HOLDERS.

Petition from Newport (Isle of Wight), for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Whitchurch; Barnstaple; Ilfracombe (three); Altrincham; Sheffield; Bolton; Millom; Burnley; Cleckheaton; Kingston on Thames; Llannor; Ashton in Mersey; Moreton in Marsh; Shipton Oliffe; Rochdale; Cefny Bedd; Halkyn; Seven Sisters; Trealaw; Luton; Ffestiniog; Mountsorrel; Brockley; Rusholme; Partick; Pye Bank; Bromley; York, Aberdovery; Tottenham; Oxford; Chorley; Westminster; Llanarmon; Ruthin (three); Colwyn Bay; Abergele; Llangollen; Stepney; Oldham; Paisley; Penrhyndendraeth; Salford; Builth; Yngs; Pennal; Talgarth (two); Gwynfa; Llanon; Brynhiwgaled; Bala; Maida Vale; Hackleton; Huby; Dewsbury; Manchester; Gwyddgrug; and Kidwelly; to lie upon the Table.

TAXATION OF FEU DUTIES.

Petition from Kilmarnock, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POOR PRISONERS' DEFENCE ACT, 1903.

Paper [presented 11th February] to be printed. [No. 71.]

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 72.]

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland in substitution for Rule 28 of 1st May, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

Copy presented, of Memorandum summarising the Regulations in force in foreign countries with regard to British Commercial Travellers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Progress made with Pier at Aultbea.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that last year the Board of Trade granted a Provisional Order for the construction of a pier at Aultbea, Ross-shire, will he state what progress has been made with the works.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) Under the Provisional Order the undertakers are not under any obligation to commence the works until 1905; but by their courtesy I am informed that they hope to complete the pier during the present year.

Prosecutions for Illegal Trawling.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the number of prosecutions for illegal trawling during the past year; and in how many cases convictions were secured.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) During 1903 there were twenty-seven prosecutions undertaken in the Sheriff Courts of Scotland for illegal trawling; and convictions were obtained in twenty-five of these cases.

School Board Electorate in Scotland.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that thousands of ratepayers in Scotland who are entitled to vote for the Parliamentary representative, and at county and parish council elections, have no vote for school board elections by reason of their rentals being less than £4, will he consider the expediency of introducing legislation such as will place the school board electorate on a more satisfactory footing.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I have already given notice of a Bill relating to education in Scotland, and must decline to make any statement on the subject until I have an opportunity of introducing that Bill.

New Equivalent Grant for Schools in Scotland.

Mr. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can state how much of the £40,000, allocated in the Minute regulating the distribution of the new equivalent grant for assistants qualified under Article 79, has been taken up; and how much has been taken up in the Highland counties.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) There is no special sum, £40,000 or other, allocated in the Minute of 28th May, 1903, for the purposes of Section 1 thereof. The claims for grants under that section have not all yet reached the Department; but, so far, the total amount found to be payable under Section 1 of the Minute equals £13,700. Of this sum, £3,310 is payable on account of schools in the Highland counties. The total sum payable is not likely to exceed £15,000, nor is the part thereof payable on account of schools in the Highland counties likely to exceed £4,000.

Auditing of Public Accounts.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the average annual amount of the revenue receipts during the past ten years, the number of the Controller and Auditor-General's officers employed in auditing those receipts, and the number of weeks in each year during which each of those officials are so employed, and the number of officials in this department at work in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The average annual amount of the revenue receipts (including local taxation revenue) during the past ten years was £124,079,562. A test audit only is given to revenue receipts. Nine officials of the Exchequer and Audit Department are engaged in auditing them, and the total time occupied by the audit is equivalent to sixty weeks for one man. Three officers are employed in Ireland upon the audit of revenue, and are occupied for a time amounting to three weeks in all.

Civil Service Commission Vote—Amount of Fees from Candidates.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the average annual amount of the Civil Service Commission Vote for the past ten years, and the annual average amount of fees received by the Civil Service Commissioners from all candidates who presented themselves at Civil Service examinations and from those who presented themselves in Ireland, and the annual average amount of this Vote expended in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The average annual amount of the Civil Service Commission Vote for the past ten years is £42,025, and the annual average amount of fees received by the Civil Service Commissioners during the same time from all candidates is £16,595, of which £1,566 was from candidates who presented themselves in Ireland. The amount expended in Ireland cannot be separately stated.

Board of Trade Vote—Branch for Irish Affairs.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the average amount of the Board of Trade Vote for the last ten years, and also give the average approximate amount spent annually in Ireland; also whether there is a separate branch for Irish business; or whether the accounts and the returns of exports and imports are amalgamated.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The average annual amount of the Vote for the Board of Trade and subordinate Departments for the last ten years was £187,299. There is no separate account of the sums expended in Ireland, and no separate branch for Irish business.

Customs Certificates for Treacle used for Feeding Stuffs.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that inconvenience is caused to grain and other merchants by His Majesty's Customs requiring them to obtain from their customers a certificate that treacle, which has been sold and invoiced to be used for feeding stuffs only, has in fact been so used; and whether he will give instructions that, where a trader has given such a certificate, he shall not be further required to make inquiries from his customers.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Under Section 1 (1) of the Revenue Act, 1903, the Commissioners of Customs are authorised to impose such conditions as may be necessary, in their opinion, for the protection of the revenue, in connection with the duty-free importation of molasses intended to be used as food for stock. Regulations have accordingly been made under which an undertaking is required to be given by the importer or proprietor to produce, whenever called upon to do so, evidence to the satisfaction of the Commissioners of Customs that the molasses has been actually used as food for stock only, or in the preparation of articles which can only be used for that purpose. The Commissioners usually require such evidence to be in the form of a certificate that the molasses has been actually used for the prescribed purpose, and such certificates can obviously not be given by traders themselves in respect of molasses which they have sold to other persons. It therefore rests with the traders to make their own arrangements with their customers to provide themselves with the necessary certificates from the actual users for production to the Customs when required.

Sylviculture in Scotland.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, whether the Board is responsible for dealing with the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Forestry in Scotland, or whether responsibility for sylviculture training in Scotland is shared by any other Department; and, if so, can he state in what respect and to what extent.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The Board of Agriculture and Fisheries are generally responsible for dealing with the recommendations of their Departmental Committee, but forestry education and educational demonstrations are allied to agricultural education and therefore come under the control of the Scottish Office. Purely experimental work and research, on the other hand, even though carried on in Scotland, fall within the province of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. The two Departments are in constant consultation with one another, and forestry interests are likely to gain rather than suffer by the fact that both Departments are in some degree concerned.

Delays in Delivery of Scotch Mails.

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state on what occasions, between 1st June and 31st October, 1903, the down night mails from London to Scotland by the West Coast Railways were late in being delivered at Carlisle, Perth, and Inverness, and the extent of the delays at these places respectively.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Between the 1st June and 31st October, 1903 (153 days), the down night mail train to Scotland by the West Coast Railways was more than fifteen minutes late in arriving at Carlisle on fifty-three days, at Perth on 130 days, and at Inverness on 115 days. The average lateness was at Carlisle fourteen minutes, at Perth twenty-seven minutes, and at Inverness thirty-four minutes. The railway companies have had some special difficulties to meet this year, especially in the tourist season, but, after making all due allowance for this, the working of the service cannot be regarded as satisfactory, although it shows improvement as compared with previous years. Frequent representations on the subject have been made to the companies concerned.

Resignations in the Postal Service.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will direct that a tabulated statement of resignations from all branches of the postal and telegraph service, together with the causes of resignation, be included in future in his annual Report.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) It is undesirable to include additional tables in the Postmaster-General's Annual Report unless some strong reason exists for doing so. I do not think that any such reason can be shown in the case of the tabulated statement referred to by the hon. Member.

Unexpended Parliamentary Grants for Devonshire Schools.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state what were the amounts of the Parliamentary Grants unexpended on outstanding liabilities before the appointed day of schools not provided by school boards for the administrative county of Devon, specifying the total amounts paid to individual school managers and to associations of voluntary schools.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) I am afraid that I cannot give the figures the hon. Member desires. All Parliamentary Grants, due for periods previous to the appointed day, are in course of being paid over to the managers, except a part of the Aid Grant which is being paid over to certain associations of voluntary schools which have satisfied the requirements of the Act. The payment of the grants will not be completed for some time to come; but in any case the Board have not the information as to the liabilities of managers on the appointed day which would enable them to say how much of the Parliamentary Grants will remain over after these liabilities have been met. The Board cannot yet say how much the portion of the Aid Grant paid over to associations of voluntary schools will eventually amount to.

Erection of Statue of Queen Victoria in Westminster Hall.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the hon. Member for the Chorley Division, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether any steps have yet been taken to secure the erection in Westminster Hall of a statue of Queen Victoria.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) No steps have actually been taken as to the erection of a statue of Queen Victoria in Westminster Hall since the Question of the hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne was answered last July.† The matter is still under consideration. The First Commissioner regrets that at this stage it is impossible for him to make any definite statement on the subject.

Ringworm Hospital for Poor Law Children.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any hospital has been erected by the Asylums Board for the treatment of poor law children affected with ringworm; and, if so, will he state the number of cases at present in the hospital and the number that have been treated there each year, the cost of the building, and the annual expenditure for the maintenance of the institution.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Metropolitan Asylums Board have two establishments for the reception and treatment of poor law children suffering from ringworm—one at Sutton, Surrey, and the other at Witham, Essex. They were purchased from the Managers of the South Metropolitan School District for £99,307 (viz.: the Sutton establishment for £88,261 and the other for £11,046). In addition, an expenditure of £13,650 was authorised in 1902 in respect of the provision of a laundry at Sutton. The number of children in these schools on the 13th inst. was:—Sutton, 419; Witham, 143; Total, 562. The total number of children admitted into the Sutton school from 26th February, 1903 (the date of opening) to the end of that year was 618. In the case of the other school, which was opened on 12th February, 1901, 316 children were admitted up to the end of 1902, and during 1903, 69 were admitted. The expenditure for the maintenance of the Witham school for the year ended Michaelmas, 1903, was £5,004, and in the case of the other school for the half year ending on that date £6,995.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxvi., 688.

Vaccination Act—Interpretation of Section 2.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the diverse action of different magistrates throughout the country in the treatment of applications under Section 2 of the Vaccination Act, 1898, it is the intention of the Home Office to issue to magistrates throughout the country a circular stating the views of the Home Office and the Local Government Board as to the correct interpretation of the section.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) This matter is, by the Statute, left in the discretion of the magistrates. I have no authority over the exercise of that discretion, and I do not, therefore, contemplate the issue of a circular such as the hon. Member suggests, which would, in the circumstances, serve no useful purpose.

Phœnix Park, Dublin—Treasury Contribution to Rates.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain the reason of the contribution in lieu of rates in respect of certain portions of Phœnix Park being discontinued; whether he is aware that the Dublin County Council passed a resolution upon the subject in the interest of their ratepayers; and whether, seeing that the financial returns from Phœnix Park are much more remunerative than those from Brockwell Park, upon which the point was raised and a decision taken, he will, under the circumstances, advise the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury to resume payment of the contribution paid for so many years to the local authority.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The contributions for Royal Parks in England, Scotland, and Ireland were discontinued on the ground that no rate would be payable if the parks were in other hands than those of the Crown and used for the same purposes as at present. I am aware of the resolution referred to. The financial returns from Phœnix Park are but a small percentage of the cost of maintenance and do not affect the principle involved.

Delay in Delivery of Eggs from Claremorris, County Mayo.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that consignments of eggs from Claremorris, in Mayo, frequently were delayed for nine days before they reached their destination, Leigh in Lancashire, about eleven miles from Manchester; and whether he will cause the Department of Agriculture in Ireland to inquire into and report upon the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham*). No complaint has been made to the Department of Agriculture in respect to this matter, but any definite representations on the subject made by aggrieved persons will be duly inquired into.

Rent Dispute on Wetherell Estate, County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at a recent quarter sessions in Longford, complaint was made that Mr. Alexander W. Percival, a receiver under the Land Judges' Court, had compelled a widow named Mary Heally, living on the Wetherell Estate in Ballincurry, county Longford, to pay two years rent, although he had only receipted her for one year's rent; and whether he will bring these facts to the notice of the Judge, with a view to his removal from the post of receiver in that Court.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) An ejectment for non-payment of rent was brought against this tenant at the Longford Quarter Sessions, in April, 1903. The amount claimed to be due was found on examination to be correct, but it appears that the agent, Mr. Percival, had been in the habit for several years previously of giving a receipt for a half-year's rent in advance of that actually paid. The tenant was thus under the impression that she owed a half-year's rent less than the amount actually due. With his consent a half-year's rent was subsequently struck off and credit was allowed to the tenant for this amount in the decree which was subsequently obtained against her. There is nothing in

Mr. Percival's action calling for notice, as suggested.

Promotion of Irish National School Assistant Teachers.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many assistant teachers in Irish national schools have been promoted from third to second grade since the introduction of the new rules.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Three assistant teachers have been promoted to the second grade since the date mentioned, in pursuance of Rule 195 (f). Ninety-three assistant teachers have been promoted to the second grade on appointment as principal teachers since the same date, pursuant to Rule 200, III.

Case of Late Private Norris.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether any moneys were due, or effects unclaimed, to the credit of the late Private P. Norris, No. 6694, 2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers, who was killed at Modderfontein on 29th January, 1901; whether, in view of the circumstances of this man's parents, any recommendation has been made on their behalf to the Royal Patriotic Fund; and whether some relief or gratuity will now be paid to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The sum due to the estate of the late No. 6694, Patrick Norris, 2nd Battalion, South Wales Borderers, amounted to £16 3s. 5d. The whole of this sum has been paid to the late soldier's father. The father's application for assistance has been twice brought before the Royal Patriotic Fund Commissioners, but they have not seen their way to granting any monetary assistance. There is no fund at the disposal of the Secretary of State from which help can be given.

Compensation for Injury to Gunner William Murphy.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that, in consequence of an accident at gunnery practice in county Donegal, Gunner William Murphy, of the Donegal Artillery (Militia) Regiment, has been an inmate of Longford Union Hospital for nine months; and whether, seeing that this man was only granted 12s. by way of remuneration for the accident, he will direct an inquiry into this man's case with a view to having him paid compensation for the injuries received.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The hon. Member has been misinformed. This gunner broke his leg through slipping on the flooring of his tent and not while at gunnery practice. He was admitted to hospital where, as he was considered to have been injured on duty and not to have been to blame for his accident, hospital stoppages were remitted. He was discharged from the hospital at his own request on 22nd September, and was admitted to Longford Union Infirmary on 13th October. Gratuity for injuries is not issued concurrently with maintenance at the public expense, and he accordingly received a gratuity of 12s. a week for the period 22nd September to 13th October only, amounting to £1 14s. 3d. in all. If on leaving the infirmary he is found incapacitated from earning his living, application for a further gratuity will be considered; but it must be added that a medical officer who visited him there reported that he had recovered from the fracture and did not seem inclined to use the leg.

Estate of the Late James M'Gowan.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the late James M'Gowan, *alias* James M'Gavan, *alias* James Murray, who died in Rhodesia in 1897, possessed of an interest in the Lendy Estate, which has since been realised, was at the time of his death in possession of a sum of £25 0s. 10½d. in cash for which no account has been rendered; and will he, following the example of the late Colonial Secretary, request the Master of the Higher Court to report on the whereabouts of this sum.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have no information as to the sum of

£25 0s. 10½d. referred to, but I will communicate with the Administrator of Southern Rhodesia, through Lord Milner, with a view to obtaining a report upon the hon. Member's statement.

White British Born Labour in the Transvaal.

MR. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if steps can be taken to ascertain the number of white British born workmen in actual employment in the mines, railways, and manufactories in the Transvaal on any one day at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I am asking Lord Milner to furnish this information so far as it is practicable to do so.

Employment of Convicts in the South African Mines.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state upon what terms and under what conditions convicts are employed in the mines in South Africa; whether any payment is made for their services; if so, upon what basis and to whom made; whether they are under the inspection of a Government official when at work; and whether they are living in compounds with other natives or in compounds set apart for convicts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have already given the information at my disposal on the subject of the convicts employed in the Transvaal mines in reply to Questions recently addressed to me†. I have asked for full particulars. The employment of convicts in the Kimberley mines takes place under the provisions of an Act of the Cape Colony, No. 23, of 1888, Section 52.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

New Service Rifle.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): On behalf of the hon. Member for Mid Norfolk I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is intended to fit the new service rifle with a wind gauge sliding bar, so as to ensure greater accuracy in marksmanship.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): A wind gauge back sight is being fitted to the new rifle.

Devonport Dockyard Blacksmiths.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the fact that recently a number of blacksmiths at Devonport Dockyard were offered the option of resigning or accepting the post of hammermen, at a reduced rate of pay, in consequence of a falling off in the demand for blacksmiths, he will arrange that, in the event of their transfer or discharge, they shall have their full title of blacksmith, as they were originally engaged, and not of hammermen, in which capacity they are now employed.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The hon. Member appears to have been misinformed with regard to this matter, as no incident of the kind has occurred recently at Devonport Dockyard. Cases, however, do sometimes occur in which, on a reduction of hands, smiths are offered the option of resigning or accepting employment as hammermen, and in all such cases it is the rule for the men on discharge to be given their full title of smith.

MR. CROOKS: I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman. My information was to the contrary. I will let him see the letter.

Royal Naval Reserve Station at Ullapool.

MR. LEVESON-GOWER (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, after considering the respective advantages of Ullapool and Lochinver, the former has been chosen as a Royal Naval Reserve Station; whether he is aware that the greater number of Reservists are from the neighbourhood of Lochinver, and from the north of it; and, if so, if Ullapool has been chosen, will he state what measures the Admiralty propose to take to facilitate the training of those Reservists who may experience difficulty in training there.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1320.

MR. PRETYMAN: The decision to establish the Royal Naval Reserve Station at Ullapool in preference to Lochinver was only arrived at after the most careful consideration of the comparative advantages offered by the two localities. It is true that at present the majority of the Royal Naval Reserve men come from the neighbourhood of Lochinver, and from the north of it, but as Ullapool is the centre of a much larger fishing population it is considered that there are greater possibilities of developing the Reserve in this direction. It is not anticipated that any special facilities will be required, as suggested in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, as the journey to Ullapool will be shorter and less expensive than the journey to Inverness, which the men at present have to undertake.

MR. BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs): Then may we take it that the negotiations are still in progress?

MR. PRETYMAN: Yes, Sir.

Swaziland.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the greater part of Swaziland is the subject of real or pretended concessions, said to have been granted by King Umbandine, and that the effect of such concessions is both to exclude native rights and also to shut out traders, even though as a fact they have been there from earlier dates, unless they choose to make payments at the will of the alleged concessionary companies; and, seeing that these concessions have long been the subject of consideration by the Swaziland Administration at Johannesburg and by the Department of Native Affairs of the Transvaal Colony, whether he will take steps to cause some equitable settlement to be at once arrived at.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The matter, which is one of unusual complexity, is receiving my earnest attention, and I hope that it will be possible to arrive at a settlement at no distant date.

British Colonies and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any objection to have printed and circulated amongst Members the communications which passed between the Governments of Australia and New Zealand and the Colonial Office in reference to Chinese labour in South Africa.

*MR. LYTTELTON: There has been no communications direct to the Colonial Office beyond that from the Government of New Zealand, published at p. 231 and the reply thereto at p. 327 of Cd. 1895. The telegrams which passed between the Premier of New Zealand and the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Transvaal Government will be published in the next Parliamentary Paper.

In reply to a Question by Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.), Mr. LYTTELTON said that so far as he was aware the protests only came from Australia, New Zealand, and Cape Colony. The other self-governing Colonies, so far from protesting, replied that the matter was one for the Transvaal to settle for itself.

British Indian Subjects and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has drawn the attention of Lord Milner to the fact that Clause 34 in the Ordinance relating to Chinese labour for the mines, relates to British Indian subjects, to whom the Ordinance itself is not applicable; and whether he will advise the Crown to veto that clause if the Transvaal Legislative Council does not take steps to abrogate it.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have already informed the hon. Member it is not proposed to employ British Indians in the Witwatersrand mines under the Ordinance. The clause is intended to be a temporary provision pending the passing of special legislation in regard to Indian labour and to provide for the possible contingency of Indian labour being employed on the railways and other works under the control of the Government.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: Arising out of that answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the question of British Indian labour in Africa is not at present the subject of correspondence between the Government of India and the Colonial Office, and whether it is not pre-determining and, in fact, prejudicing one of the important points under discussion to bring British Indian labourers under the operation of the repatriation clause of the Chinese Ordinance?

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would lay on the Table the communication received from the Indian Government with reference to the proposed importation of Chinese labour and the applicability of the Ordinance to British Indian subjects?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of that Question.

Central African Labour for the Transvaal Mines.

MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether authority has been given for the recruiting for the Transvaal mines of 5,000 natives in the British Central African Protectorate; and whether he is aware that in consequence of the want of labour the work upon the railway in course of construction in the Protectorate has come to a standstill.

THE UNDER - SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The answer to the first part of the Question, as I stated in reply to the hon. Member for East Perthshire on the 15th instant,† is in the affirmative. We have received no information of the character indicated in the second part of the Question.

East Africa and Uganda Currency.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that trade in the British East Africa and Uganda Protectorates is seriously hampered by the absence of any currency of a higher denomination than one rupee, no gold or paper money being in circulation; and whether any steps will be taken to introduce a paper currency into those protectorates.

EARL PERCY: A draft Order in Council providing for a paper currency has been prepared and submitted to the Commissioners of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates for their observations.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Will the noble Lord consider at the same time the expediency of introducing a lesser coinage?

EARL PERCY: That matter is under consideration.

Brussels Sugar Convention—Permanent Commission.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state what meetings of the Permanent Commission or the Permanent Bureau, set up under the Brussels Convention, have taken place since July, 1903; when will the next meeting take place; whether any regular periods for meetings in the future have been arranged; whether any report on questions submitted to these Commissions has been received; and, if so, whether it can now be laid before Parliament.

EARL PERCY: A meeting of the Permanent Commission took place in October last. The next meeting will take place in March. No regular periods for meetings in the future have been arranged. A report of the proceedings at the last meeting has been received, but its presentation has been deferred in view of the fact that the discussion of the questions raised at that meeting will be resumed next month.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether any change has been made in the representation of the United Kingdom on the Permanent Commission and the Permanent Bureau set up under the Brussels Sugar Convention; how many delegates or assistant delegates are sent by this country; what is the total number of delegates and countries represented on each body; who are the present British representatives; and what amount will appear in the Estimates of this year to provide for their cost?

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix, 1324.

Earl PERCY: There has been no change in the British representation on the Permanent Commission. The Permanent Bureau is an office for the discharge of the clerical business of the Commission. The United Kingdom is represented by one delegate and four assistant delegates, one of whom was appointed on behalf of the Colonial Office and another on behalf of the India Office. Eight countries are represented, each country having one delegate and from one to four assistant delegates. The British representatives are, Sir Henry Bergne, Delegate, and Mr. Martineau, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Ozanne, and Mr. Pittar, Assistant Delegates. The provision for their cost will appear in the Estimates under the heading of Special Missions.

Superannuation in the Post Office Telephone Service.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the date from which the service of those telephonists who were transferred from the National Telephone Company to the Post Office is counted for the purpose of bonus, pension, or marriage gratuity.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The service of telephonists transferred from the National Telephone Company to the Post Office is reckoned for the benefits of the Superannuation Acts from the date of their transfer to the Post Office, provided that their Post Office service fulfils the conditions prescribed by those Acts. As regards marriage gratuities, telephonists come under the general rule that an officer must have served in the Civil Service in some capacity for six years altogether, but the gratuity is calculated on her established service only. The unestablished Post Office service of these telephonists is reckoned towards the qualifying period of six years.

Municipal Contracts with Foreign Firms.

Mr. CROOKS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the number of tons of tram rails purchased by the Birmingham and other Corporations from Belgium and Germany during the last three years.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): If the hon. Member will supply me with the names of the Corporations in addition to Birmingham from which he desires information, I shall be happy to communicate with them, but as he is no doubt aware I have no power to require any Corporation to give the information.

Mr. CROOKS: Have you the figures for Birmingham?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, I have not.

Motor-Cars Committee.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state why he has refused to place a representative of the Rural District Councils Associations upon his Departmental Motor-Cars Committee; whether, seeing that the Rural District Councils Association represents over 240 rural district councils, he will reconsider his refusal, seeing that the County Councils Association has been given representation.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): The Committee has not been formed on the basis of giving representation to associations of local authorities, and no such representation has in fact been given, although I believe that one member of the Committee is also a member of the County Councils Association. I understand that the several associations of county councils, municipal corporations, and rural district councils have given or will give evidence before the Committee, and this is, I think, the proper course and sufficiently meets the case.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that it was only by accident that the County Councils Association was represented.

MR. GRANT LAWSON: That is so.

Land Purchase in County Kilkenny—Mount Loftus Estate.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estate of Mr. Murphy, of Mount Loftus, county Kilkenny, lately in the Land Judge's Court, has been sold to the tenants; and, if so, whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners will be directed to the case of Eliza Eaton, of Powerstown East, on that estate, an evicted tenant, with the view of having her reinstated in her former holding.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The greater portion of this estate has been sold to the tenants. I am not aware whether application has been made to the Estates Commissioners by, or on behalf of, Eliza Eaton; but if such an application be made it will be considered.

Tubbercurry Police Hut.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of police at present stationed in the hut evicted some years ago on Leitrim Hill Farm, near Tubbercurry, county Sligo; will he say what is the nature of the duties assigned to these men; and whether he intends to have this hut retained as a permanent fixture in the district.

MR. WYNDHAM: There are three men quartered in the hut. It was erected on its present site to meet a condition of affairs which happily has now almost passed away. The question of its removal is under consideration.

Irish Magistrates and the Irish Language.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that magistrates in Canada are permitted to sign their names in French to official documents; and, if so, will he explain why Mr. McDonagh Mahony, of Cahirciveen, is prevented from signing in Irish, though that is the language of his country and is spoken daily by more than three-fourths of the people amongst whom he lives.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): My right hon. friend has requested me to reply to this Question. The Irish Government has no information that the fact is as alleged in the first part of the Question. In answer to the second inquiry I have nothing to add to my reply to the similar Question of the 11th instant.†

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: And has the Lord Chancellor power to remove a magistrate for signing his name in Irish?

MR. ATKINSON: He has done so because this gentleman persists in overriding the Statute.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: But has he acted illegally? The Statute says that English shall be the official language in the body of the documents, but it says nothing about the signature.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Does the Chief Secretary really think that in a case of this kind a magistrate should be removed because he signs his name in Irish? It is ridiculous.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the rolls of Parliament have been signed in Irish for some years?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order! order! The Question on the Paper has been answered.

Kerry Railway and Harbour Guarantees.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that Kerry pays annually out of its rates eight times as much as Connaught and Donegal together for railway and harbour guarantees, that the rate raised for this purpose alone every year averages 1s. 1d. per pound of the total valuation of the whole county, he will reconsider the advisability of applying a portion of the money accumulated under Section 58 of the Local Government Act of 1898 to the relief of those expenses in Kerry.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1032.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The total amount contributed by way of railway and harbour guarantees in Kerry during the last completed year for which I have information was £21,591. But sums amounting to £12,755 were paid to the county in relief of such charges, and the net charge against the county was thus reduced to £8,836. In the province of Connaught and county Donegal the figures under the same heads were £15,404, £7,740, and £7,664. With respect to the concluding part of the Question, I cannot at present supplement my replies to the Questions put to me on the 15th instant by the hon. Member.† He is aware of the protracted efforts which I have made to arrive at such an arrangement over the Dingle Railway as would, incidentally, relieve its rates.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: From what source are these figures obtained? I have returns which show they are not correct.

Mr. WYNDHAM: They have been arrived at, after considerable labour, from a House of Commons Return of last year.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 3, 4, 5, and 5A be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That in the case of the Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Earl of Harewood' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways (Railways), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First Two Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee: Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Baird, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Beckett, Mr. Boland, Mr. Griffith Boscawen, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Cawley, Sir Charles Cayzer, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Jesse Collings, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Crombie, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Doogan, Sir J. Fortescue Flannery, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Garfit, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir James Joicey, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Bonar Law, Sir Elliott Lees, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Long, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Charles McArthur, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. William McKillop, Sir William Mather, Mr. William Maxwell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. O'Mara, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Pike Pease, Colonel Pilkington, Sir James Rankin, Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Round, Mr. Runciman, Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir John Barrington Simeon, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Theodore

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1328.

Taylor, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Whitley Thomson, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Tully, Sir William Walrond, Mr. George Whiteley, Colonel Williams, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Young.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee: The Lord Advocate, Mr. Agg-Gardner, Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Barran, Sir George Bartley, Mr. Boland, Mr. Butcher, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Coghill, Mr. Colston, Mr. Cripps, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. George Faber, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Flynn, Sir Frederick Godson, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Henry David Green, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Harwood, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. James Heath, Mr. Helder, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jordan, Sir Lees Knowles, Mr. William F. Lawrence, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Legge, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Loder, Mr. Loyd, Mr. Macdona, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. William Moore, Mr. Arthur Morton, Captain Norton, Sir Francis Sharp Powell, Colonel Pryce-Jones, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Remnant, Mr. Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Soames, Mr. Soares, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Stevenson, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Ure, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Robert Wallace, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee of Selection: That, in pursuance of the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following additional Member to act as a Commissioner: Mr. Charles Douglas.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

"To amend the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," presented by Mr. Cripps; supported by Sir George Bartley; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 94.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (REPORTS OF MONEY COMMITTEES).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committee of Ways and Means, and Committees authorising the expenditure of Public Money other than the Committee of Supply may be entered upon at any hour after midnight, though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order Sittings of the House."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*)

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said it might be thought by some that the position of that Motion under the heading "At the Commencement of Public Business" brought it within the ten minutes rule, but that was not so. This was a proposal for a new Sessional Order, true it was in the same terms as one passed last year; but still it was open to very serious objection. Under the present Rules opposed business stopped at midnight, and the Sittings had to be suspended at 1 a.m., but to those Rules there were exceptions, including Bills originating in Ways and Means Proceedings in pursuance of Act of Parliament, Proceedings relating to Standing Orders, and those exempted by specific Motion made at the commencement of public business. He thought the exceptions were sufficiently numerous, but this proposed Sessional Order went far beyond them all, for it not only provided that business under consideration at one o'clock might be continued, but that certain business even if not reached by one o'clock might be taken after that hour. He was strongly in favour of adhering to the Twelve o'Clock Rule, and though if good reasons could be shown for it he would not oppose this Motion, he did ask for some explanation which it was made.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) supported the contention of the hon. Member. He reminded the House how the taking of the Supply after twelve o'clock in former years led to great scandals and to the voting of enormous sums of money without discussion, as well as to remarkable scenes in the House. Everybody must agree that it was desirable all financial business should be taken before midnight, and he hoped the hon. Member therefore would press his opposition to a division.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said that he had put the Motion down in exactly the same terms as those in which it was put down last session. It was to enable certain Bills founded on Resolutions in Committee of Ways and Means to be brought in without undue delay. However, in the absence of the Leader of the House, he would not press the Motion, and would postpone it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: What Bills are to be taken under it?

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: Chiefly the Cunard Bill and the Telegraph Bill.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then I shall strongly oppose it.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I showed the Motion to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Leeds last night and he raised no objection to its being put down.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Better postpone it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I shall object to postponement. Let it be withdrawn.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I beg to move the Adjournment of the debate.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) pointed out that the right hon. Baronet had already spoken.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): Then I will move the Adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Pretyman.*)

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the business for which this Order was asked was really far more important than the business usually covered by such a Motion. He hoped that before the Government put the Motion down again they would seriously consider the necessity of taking the Bills named before twelve o'clock. The Resolution would be strongly opposed.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) promised to consider the point. He repeated that the Motion had been put down with the general concurrence of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He hoped the debate would be adjourned.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he could see no reason for adjournment. The House was quite ready to come to a decision. It would answer the purpose to withdraw the Motion; otherwise he would press his opposition to a division.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and negatived.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee:—

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.]

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

1. £1,270,000 (Supplementary), in respect of the following Navy Services, viz:—

Vote 8, Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, etc.—

Section I. Personnel - -	£53,200
Section III. Contract Work	1,254,800
	£1,308,000
Section II. Matériel— Deduct Appropriations in Aid	38,000
	£1,270,000

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) observed that this Vote involved, though he would not dwell on them, the questions of Supplementary Estimates and Appropriations-in-aid raised the previous day. The discussions which had already taken place had presented problems to the solution of which some half-dozen Ministers and ex-Ministers had contributed without, he was afraid, enlightening the House, but he hoped that the debate that day would result in their getting answers both intelligible and satisfactory. He wished the Committee to bear in mind that these Supplementary Estimates could not be considered apart from the original Estimates for the year to which they were to be attached. He was in the recollection of the House when he said that last session began with loud declarations from the Government and indeed from all parts of the House of economical intentions, which never came into effect. After all those violent declarations for economy it was his duty to point out that last year's original Estimate was the largest Estimate ever submitted for the Navy in time of peace, and now a Supplementary Estimate was presented. The original Estimate was dumped down on the Table of the House without any explanation from the Minister whose duty it was to state the international policy which made this expenditure necessary and, having failed last year to elicit the explanations, they required, they, the Committee, were bound to approach the consideration of the Supplementary Estimate with even greater gravity and attention than had been displayed the day before in regard to the Army.

He would like to point out the financial effect of the proposals before the Committee. This Estimate, if passed, would bring the total expenditure on the Navy in the year about to end to the highest point yet reached. In his opinion the Leader of the Opposition had under-estimated the amount of the expenditure for the year. The gross naval expenditure submitted in the original and Supplementary Estimates amounted to £37,500,000, but to that must be added what his right hon. friend did not add, more than £4,000,000 under the Naval Works Act, making a total of £41,500,000, or nearly £1 per head, man, woman, and child, of the population of the United Kingdom. A more serious point was the Vote to which this large addition was being made—because it was a Vote the enlargement of which involved an increase in all the other Navy Votes. The Shipbuilding Vote was raised by the Supplementary Estimate from £17,300,000 to £18,600,000, a sum in excess of the whole Navy Estimates of 1895. New construction was increasing at an alarming rate. Two years ago the Government asked for £9,500,000 for this purpose; last year they asked for £10,500,000, which the Supplementary Estimate now increased to £11,500,000. He thought such figures deserved the serious attention of the Committee. Notwithstanding the overwhelming importance of the Navy in the matter of national defence some regard must be had to the finances of the country; and these figures were so vast that hon. Members were bound to ask for explanation and justification, even as regarded comparatively small items. He asked for information regarding this new Vote. What was the million and quarter asked for, and why was it demanded at this time? He thought it was more or less an open secret that the bulk of the demand related to the acquisition of two warships which were built for the Chilian Government, but which had been purchased by our own Government. £700,000 of the Vote, he understood, was a payment on account of those battleships, the balance of the purchase money falling due in the coming financial year. Then, he took it, that part of the Supplementary Vote was required for repairs and reconstruction, and as to that he would like some information, as reconstruction would seem to point to defects in the original plans. But the second Question he desired to put was of a more delicate nature — Why did the Government buy these Chilian warships? In reply to the hon. Member for King's Lynn on 2nd March last, the Prime Minister stated that the question of the purchase of the battleships referred to had been carefully considered by the Admiralty, who had clearly come to the opinion that the ships were not suitable for their purposes and that it was not advisable to buy them. That statement seemed to involve the Government in a certain amount of difficulty. Having declared the ships to be unsuitable, they had now bought them and were asking the Committee to ratify the contract. It was incumbent on the Admiralty to explain why a purchase which was inadvisable, imprudent, and improper a year ago was advisable, prudent, and proper now. It was not the duty of the British Admiralty, with the enormous resourses entrusted to them, to rush in and buy every warship they saw for sale in order to prevent its falling into the hands of a foreign Power. Such a course of action would simply offer a premium to, or encourage the creation of speculative builders of battleships. He presumed it was simply a question of confirming the contract, and that no money had passed.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) was understood to intimate that money had been paid.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said it was extraordinary that this should have been done without the assent of Parliament. Somewhat loose things were done three or four years ago when Mr. Goschen arranged a supplementary programme. No Vote was taken in Committee of Supply; but the House was informed of the matter and debated the subject before it was carried out. In this case, however, the battleship programme had been increased to the extent of two vessels, and not only had the contracts been made, but money had been paid, and all this had been done without the assent of Parliament. He did not blame the Admiralty. Another department was here involved, and when a transaction so peculiar was brought before Parliament there ought to be some representative of the Treasury present. The reason suggested last year for the purchase was that it would prevent the ships falling into the hands of a foreign Power, but the Prime Minister appeared inferentially to reject that reason. What other reasons were there? He hoped the Secretary to the Admiralty would throw as much light as possible on the matter, but as delicate considerations might be involved he would not press this part of the case too strongly.

The next point would not admit of much development at this stage, but it was a very material consideration. The Committee were asked to add to the already colossal Estimates of the year. If such a thing were done in private life the first question asked would be whether they could afford it. Surely the Committee ought to pause before consenting to this additional expenditure. He hoped that by passing these Estimates they would not be deliberately creating a deficit in the finances of the year. How much of the expenditure here proposed would fall upon the naval funds of next financial year? The Committee were entitled to that information, and also to an assurance that the Estimates and programme, shortly to be introduced, would be reduced by an amount corresponding to that represented by these supplementary proposals. (At this stage the Chancellor of the Exchequer entered the House and the hon. Member repeated his remarks concerning the Treasury.)

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) held that the Supplementary Estimates did not so much concern the particular department in charge of special items as the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. They represented a financial operation of the most objectionable character, and every good financier who had occupied the position of Prime Minister had done his best to prevent any Supplementary Estimates whatever. This year the gross Supplementary Estimates amounted to £7,800,000. That was a stupendous amount to add to the already enormous Budget. It represented a mistake in calculating the original Budget, and, so far as it was a mistake, the Government had, involuntarily no doubt, deceived the House in regard to the financial situation, and by that false view had extorted from Parliament consent to the reduction of some taxes and the imposition of others; in fact they had deprived the House of the opportunity of dealing with the finances of the country as a whole. In these Supplementary Estimates the gross sum authorised was £1,401,500. There was to come off that a surplus of

£93,500, and there were Appropriations-in-aid (extra receipts) £38,000. First of all, with regard to the surplus of £93,500, which represented a miscalculation, and the Appropriations-in-aid, which also represented a miscalculation and a deception. The Admiralty calculated the receipts they were likely to get in the course of the year and this calculation was exceeded by £38,000. If this Vote was not passed this sum would go to the extinction of the National Debt under the general financial rules of the House; that £38,000 was on its way to the National Debt Office, and it was only by these Supplementary Estimates that its course to the National Debt would be stayed and it would be applied in diminution of the gross Supplementary Estimates. All that was extremely objectionable and calculated to impair the control of this House over expenditure, and to deceive the public as to the total amount spent. All such financial proceedings were of the most objectionable and dangerous character, and it was because of this that the country had failed to appreciate the extraordinary gravity of the situation. Perhaps his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty would be able to give them some explanation and justification for the presentation of any Supplementary Estimates at all. There was no explanation in his opinion which could justify them except one, and that was the sudden arising of unforseen circumstances since the Estimates were presented. That was the only explanation which the Government would be justified in giving. The hon. Member had accurately quoted the Question he put last year to the First Lord of the Treasury, and the answer he received with regard to the "Triumph" and the "Swiftsure." He gave that answer not as the President of the Council of Defence, but as the head of the Government responsible for the finances and for the military and naval policy. The answer the right hon. Gentleman gave was that these vessels were unsuited to our purpose, but he was entirely of the contrary opinion, and he ventured to say that they were better than any we had. He challenged the hon. Member to state if that was the Admiralty opinion now, or whether it had always been their opinion. He still affirmed that these battleships were far superior to anything we had in our Navy before they were purchased. He could not help thinking, when the First Lord of the Treasury replied on the 2nd of March last that these ships were unsuited to the requirements of the British Navy, either that he must have been misled by the Admiralty, or else the Chancellor of the Exchequer sat on the strong box like a bull-dog showing his teeth, and refused to let them have the money. In regard to building there were no firms in this country who would venture to produce a battleship costing nearly £1,000,000 on the mere chance of finding a purchaser. He adhered to his statement that these vessels were better than any we then had, and better than we now have. In the first place, for size and displacement they were the most powerfully armed ships yet constructed. They had four 10-inch guns each, fourteen 7·5-inch guns, fourteen 14-pounders and ten smaller guns. As to their armaments he challenged contradiction that they were superior to anything in our Navy, or any other Navy at this moment. They were not the production of the inventive brain of any Admiralty official, but the production of a private shipbuilder. Their armour was equal to that of our very latest battleship, the "Russell," and as to speed they were even better, for they could do twenty-one knots, and the "Russell" could only do nineteen knots.

MR. PRETYMAN: No!

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that at any rate they were a bit better in speed. Their radius of action was 12,000 yards. In consequence of the great enterprise of the firm that built these vessels and gunned them they were fitted for using a nitro-cellulose powder. The Admiralty being desirous of having everything of the Admiralty pattern had chosen to condemn this new powder. He maintained that this powder was better than our cordite powder, but the Admiralty did not approve of it, and the result was that they were going to make some sort of modification of their cordite powder for these guns He understood that was so.

MR. PRETYMAN: No!

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he was mistaken then. He understood that those guns were not fitted for cordite powder and that they would have to make some modification of the cordite powder because it could not be used in those guns. When the Admiralty bought the ships and the guns they certainly ought to have bought the powder and the whole bag-o'-tricks. The maker believed that this powder was far superior to cordite and the guns were made for it, and when under those circumstances they bought new ships and new guns using a new powder it was much better that they should buy the whole thing throughout instead of trying to modify it. Some objection had been made to the ammunition supply, and he was informed that the Admiralty were wedded to a system of ammunition supply by hand. These new guns were fitted with mechanical ammunition suppliers and that was a very great improvement, and he hoped the Admiralty were not going to interfere with it. He had made these remarks because he was convinced that they were superior to anything we possessed in our Navy. He trusted they would use the powder invented for the guns. It seemed to him that a battleship represented so much of the naval defence of any country that the acquisition of these two vessels by any other country would have altered the balance of naval power. They were equal to two divisions of an army, and therefore in times of doubt and difficulty to allow any foreign country to acquire two battleships which this country needed, was to allow a change in the relative balance of naval power which might be a source of very great danger. In March, last year, he urged His Majesty's Government to buy these vessels, and the reply he received was that they were unsuited to our requirements. That reply must necessarily be abandoned in face of the facts he had adduced in respect of the ships, otherwise the Admiralty would not have purchased them at all. Why did not the Admiralty purchase them last year? He strongly suspected there was a reason for it.

He recalled with some apprehension the accumulation of these expenses, but the Committee should know what the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to do in the way of providing for the deficit he would have to face when he came to his Budget. His idea of the way in which these ships should have been purchased was that they should have taken the place of two in the existing programme. They would not then have saddled the country with extra expense, and they would have had the advantage of having two battleships ready two years earlier—two battleships of that superior quality which he had endeavoured to describe to the house. He regretted that they were not purchased last year, but he was glad that they were purchased this year. He was extremely sorry for the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the financial consequences of the purchase. He had only one other thing to say with regard to the Supplementary Estimates. They did not clearly show—and he wished to ask his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty to state—what part of the total Estimate was represented by the purchase money of these ships. He always regretted Supplementary Estimates, and he regretted those now before the Committee more than usual. It was not a fact that this was the first time he had complained of them. He had, year after year, protested against them. His voice had seemed like that of one crying in the wilderness, He hoped the House was becoming more or less alive to the great importance of this wicked system of Supplementary Estimates and he hoped this was one of the last which would be presented to the House.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) said the hon. Member for Dundee and his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn had pointedly addressed themselves to him for some explanation. Perhaps the Committee would allow him to give his reply at once. The Committee would not expect him to enter into the merits of naval guns or considerations of naval construction which the hon. Member for King's Lynn put forward, nor would they expect him to go into the details of the Estimates. He thought these would be fully explained by his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty. What did concern him were the remarks of his hon. friend as to Supplementary Estimates in general. The hon. Member was perfectly right in saying that this was not the first occasion on which he had drawn the attention of the House to the inconvenience of Supplementary Estimates, and no one who had been, as he had been, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, could be unaware of that inconvenience. He took his present office long after the current financial year began, but he and his hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had done their best to limit the Supplementary Estimates. They perfectly agreed that Supplementary Estimates were in themselves an evil, and that they ought not to be used as a method of meeting the ordinary and foreseen expenditure of the year, but that they ought to be reserved for cases which could not be foreseen, or which had some special character attaching to them, It would not be in order for him, in connecton with this matter, to make any observations on the other Supplementary Estimates presented this year. He would confine himself to the Supplementary Estimate now before the Committee. It was due practically to three causes. In the first place it was due to the purchase of the Chilian battleships; in the second place to contractors for Government work having made greater progress than the Admiralty thought it possible to anticipate when the year's Estimates were framed; and in the third place to the fact that the original sums taken for repairs of ships then actually on active service in connection with coaling stations, had been proved to be insufficient for the necessary repairs when the ships came into the dockyards. He thought the Committee would see that the Estimate for the amount of work to be done on ships which were still actually serving on foreign stations must be a speculative Estimate, and even the most jealous guardian of national finance could not blame the Admiralty if they could not always estimate accurately the amount shown to be necessary when a ship was in dockyard and when the machinery was actually accessible to investigation. Then there was the question of progress on the part of the contractors. He had the honour to serve for five years on the Board of Admiralty. It was a constant complaint from both sides of the House, during those five years, that the Board failed to obtain from the contractors the work which it was anticipated they would be able to perform within the year to which the Estimates were applicable. They were constantly urged that it was the bounden duty of the Board to take steps to accelerate the work of the contractors, and to see that they secured the output of work estimated. The present Board of Admiralty were in a more fortunate position. The contractors had more than fulfilled their expectations.

The Committee would remember how long in advance these Estimates had to be made. He found from experience that the chief anxiety was lest the Government should not have sufficient money to pay, and they over-estimated very much the amount of work within the year, and unless one cut down that estimate one was forced to ask the Committee for more money than was actually required. It was extraordinarily difficult to get an accurate estimate of the amount of work which would be done in a particular year on a contract extending over two or three years, and there seemed always to be an element of uncertainty in regard to it. In the present year, the contractors had earned more than was estimated, and, of course, the Government were bound to ask the House to make provision for that. It was not, however, new expenditure in the sense of being expenditure of which the House had no knowledge or control, but it was payment for a more rapid rate of progress which would result in our having the goods for which we paid more rapidly than we anticipated. As to the third cause for this Supplementary Estimate—the purchase of the Chilian ships—he said the Committee might take it that His Majesty's Government did not contemplate the purchase of the ships last year. That purchase was an unforeseen emergency of the kind to which the hon. Member for King's Lynn alluded. The hon. Member for Dundee did not question the discretion with which the Government acted in purchasing those ships at the time, and the price paid for them.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he only asked for information.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that was not incompatible with what he had stated. The hon. Gentleman did not question the purchase, but he did question the propriety of the action of the Treasury in sanctioning any payment on account of this purchase, until the Vote had been submitted to the House of Commons. It was in connection with that matter that the hon. Gentleman required his own presence in the House. He had been called away from a Committee meeting which he was attending. He accepted as Chancellor of the Exchequer full responsibility for having anticipated the sanction of Parliament for the purchase of these ships. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, it was not desirable that they should purchase the ships at the price which was asked, and under the circumstances which prevailed at the time when they were questioned on the subject in last session of Parliament. When the matter arose again this winter at the reduced price then obtained, and under the circumstances of the time, the Government thought it was not only desirable, but they thought they should be greatly lacking in their duty to the House and the country if they did not secure those ships. Two battleships added to the strength of another Power might seriously disturb the balance of naval power, and might gravely affect the Naval Estimates which would have to be estimated to this House in the future. We got them on much more favourable terms than there was any prospect of obtaining them when the question was mooted last spring or summer, and in the circumstances of the time the Government felt that it was their bounden duty to obtain the vessels. It was an essential part of the contract that the payments falling due on these ships should be met before Christmas, and in the course of the present financial year they could not have carried the contract through unless they were willing to make these terms. Under these circumstances he, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Government, of which he was a member, did not hesitate to take the responsibility of making the payment which this Committee were now asked to ratify. They took the responsibility of acting on behalf of the country, at a moment when it was essential that action should be taken if the result desired was to be obtained at all, without waiting for Parliamentary sanction, which there was no doubt, under all the circumstances, Parliament would be willing to give. There was only one other point to which he would refer.

AN HON. MEMBER: What was the price?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the price was £1,875,000, of which there was included in the present Estimates £707,000; and the remainder would appear in the Estimates for next year. The hon. Members for King's Lynn and Dundee had asked what effect this purchase ought to have on our naval programme generally. He thought that the Committee would see that a purchase made at that period of the year could not materially affect the programme of the year in which we now were. Whether or not it would affect the calculations for next was obvious to everyone; but he conceived it would be out of order to discuss the programme for next year on the Supplementary Estimates. It would be more convenient to do so after the First Lord of the Admiralty had made his statement.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that as he understood it, the real reason why these ships had been purchased now was that they were to be had cheaper than ever before.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not know exactly what the hon. Gentleman's question really was.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that when the purchase was first mooted they were told that the ships were absolutely unsuited for the British Navy.

MR. PRETYMAN said that the term used was that they were "unsuitable."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that that was a merely grammatical criticism. The Prime Minister's answer was that the Admiralty had clearly come to the opinion that the ships which were on sale were not suitable for their purpose, and that it would not be advisable to buy them. The explanation which he and his friends had asked was why were they bought now or at all; and now the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that it was because they could be had at a more reasonable price. The right hon. Gentleman did not allude to the question why the Government purchased ships now which were unsuitable a year ago? The net result of the right hon. Gentleman's statement was that the Admiralty bought ships because they were cheap. When the right hon. Gentleman made that statement had he the Prime Minister's answer last year in his mind? The right hon. Gentleman spoke of an immediate urgency having arisen; but what was the urgency? He did not so much object to the contract having been entered into, but to the fact that the contract had not only been made but executed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that of course he had in his mind the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury last year, but the hon. Gentleman had not correctly followed the reasons he had given for the purchase of the ships now. Ships more than anything else might be unsuitable to purchase if the price were exorbitant, and suitable if the price were reasonable. But he did not confine himself entirely to the question of price, nor even did he lay great stress upon it. He did not want to go into much detail on this question, but in the circumstances of last year the Government did not consider the ships a desirable or suitable purchase: although the circumstances of last autumn, and the price at which they could obtain them, made their acquisition suitable. The hon. Gentleman said that he did not object to the Government making the contract, but to the Government paying money on the contract without the sanction of the House of Commons. Now, he had told the hon. Gentleman in the most explicit language that he took full responsibility for that action. If the Government had not agreed to make that payment as, and when, they did, they could not have purchased the ships at all. They considered it essential to purchase the ships, and that if they had not done so they would have been lacking in their duty to the country. Hence, they had not hesitated to take the responsibility and find the money.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said that the Committee was reduced to this condition of affairs—that when the Government in March last declared that the Chilian ships were unsuitable, they really meant they were unsuitable as regarded price. The hon. Member for King's Lynn ventured to say last year in a supplementary Question that these ships were very much better than any of our ships, and the reply of the Prime Minister to that was that the Admiralty thought differently. Now the House was told that the reason was that the price was too high. He supposed the Government thought that at some future time they could make a better bargain. That seemed to him to be trifling with words. They were plain men in the House and they wanted to know the meaning of it in plain words. When told that the ships were unsuitable they could come to no other conclusion than that the Admiralty were advised by their professional advisers that the ships were unsuitable for the British Navy. Was the question of the purchase of these ships submitted to the consideration of the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer. Between the time when these ships were offered to the Government and when they were finally purchased a great deal had happened to the Government. Their Chancellor of the Exchequer and others had left them, and it was possible that something new might have arisen and actuated the Government to buy the ships, overriding what the right hon. Gentleman had said. It would be interesting to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had any voice in vetoing the purchase of these ships. The Government had not succeeded in convincing the House that there was any emergency for buying these ships at a later period. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"] What was the emergency? He was not aware of it. If it were a competition to prevent Russia or other nations getting the ships he did not consider that an emergency at all. What had been made clear was that at a later period the Government bought the ships because they could buy them cheaper although they had said at an earlier stage that they were not suitable. They were beginning to understand what the words "suitable" and "cheaper" really did mean. But there was another reason. He was not ready to accept the opinion of the hon. Member for King's Lynn that these ships were superior to anything we had. It might be that they were, but he could not take it on the hon. Gentleman's pure word.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that the hon. Gentleman might take it on the details of the figures he had laid before the Committee.

Mr. KEARLEY said that they did not always understand with great clearness what the hon. Gentleman said. The hon. Gentleman was so full of knowledge that ordinary persons with ordinary brains found some difficulty in filling in the details. But the hon. Member would agree with him that the Admiralty had striven to get homogeneous ships for our Navy. Now the two Chilian ships, they knew at the outset, were not of that kind. They would require a special kind of ammunition. That of itself would be a great difficulty. He knew sufficient of the working of the Naval Ordnance Department to know that there was sometimes great difficulty in serving out to our ships ordinary service ammunition. He had known ammunition found in ships of the Navy which was quite unsuitable for what was required. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in explaining some of the items in the Supplementary Estimates attributed it to inaccurate estimation of repairs, and rather suggested, he thought, that the inaccuracy largely took place in the Government establishments. As a matter of fact, if anyone would refer to the Supplementary Estimates he would find that the item of £275,000 was all for repairs and alterations of ships built by contractors and repaired in contract yards. Last year he (Mr. Kearley) called attention to the very unsatisfactory basis upon which these repairs were carried out. In the Government yards an estimate was asked for and expected to be worked to. In the contractor's yard nothing of the kind took place. Ships went in there for repairs and a schedule of prices was worked on, but the contractor was allowed to put on a large percentage of profit, and consequently the Government never knew what the repairs were going to cost when a ship went into the contractor's yard. That was really the cause of the expenditure of the £275,000. It was not what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said—namely, inaccuracy in estimating, but that no price was fixed at the outset. Contractors had a real good thing of it in these repairs. Last year he urged the Admiralty to treat the contractors, when carrying out repairs, in precisely the same way as they did the Government yards in this matter. He believed the Estimates given in His Majesty's dockyards were exceedingly correct. The Chilian battleships they were told cost £1,875,000. They were bought through a distinguished firm in the city, Messrs. Anthony Gibbs and Co. He would like to be informed what commission the Government paid for the purchase of these ships.

Mr. PRETYMAN: I do not know that any commission was paid upon them.

Mr. KEARLEY: Then why did Messrs. Gibbs have to vacate their seats in this House?

Mr. PRETYMAN: Because they sold us the ships.

Mr. KEARLEY: Did they get no profit?

Mr. PRETYMAN said the Admiralty contracted to purchase these ships from the firm in question, and that was the transaction which caused the vacation of the seats. What arrangement was made by Messrs. Gibbs with the Chilian Government he did not know.

Mr. KEARLEY: They were acting as principals in the transaction and not as agents?

Mr. PRETYMAN: Yes.

Mr. KEARLEY: Then I am content.

Mr. RITCHIE (Croydon) said that he had been asked to state what his share in these negotiations had been. These ships were offered to the British Government when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer; but as to his having vetoed the purchase, "vetoed" was hardly the right word.

He and the First Lord of the Admiralty had a great deal of discussion as to the propriety of accepting the offer of the ships; and under the circumstances and at that time he certainly objected to sanctioning the purchase, the money for which would have been over and above the amount already agreed to for naval purposes. Of course he had much communication with the First Lord of the Admiralty while Naval Estimates were being prepared, and the amount which he sanctioned for naval purposes was the largest amount that had ever been presented to the House of Commons on that account. After the discussions which had taken place, he did not doubt that the Admiralty were justified in asking for the grant which was sanctioned; and he would have been taking a great responsibility on himself if he had tried to reduce the Estimates presented to him beyond the point which had been reached in negotiation between himself and the Frst Lord. Having sanctioned this very large but justifiable expenditure, he was unwilling to increase the amount by the purchase of two ships which had never been contemplated as necessary at the time the Estimates were prepared. He might also say that the First Lord of the Admiralty did not by any means press him in the matter, but quite saw the force of the objection to this very great increase in the naval expenditure of the year. While they were discussing the question the First Lord of the Admiralty made him aware that in some respects the ships were not exactly the kind of vessel which the Admiralty would have built if they had been building new ships; but the language used never amounted to anything like a statement that for all naval purposes the ships were unsuitable. The price at which the ships were then offered was a higher price than that at which they had since been bought.

MR. KEARLEY: What was the price?

MR. RITCHIE said that it might not be advisable to mention it. Although he was far from saying that the price alone would make the vessels unsuitable, yet having regard to the fact that they were not exactly the type of vessel that the Admiralty would have built, it was proper to take the price into consideration. He did not think that, even though ships were cheap, they should be purchased if we did not want them. Nothing was more to be avoided than purchasing a thing simply because it was cheap. At that time the ships were not absolutely essential, because the Estimates amply provided for all the wants of the Navy. But having said so much, he must add that, having accepted the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there were circumstances connected with the present situation which amply warranted the right hon. Gentleman in assenting now to what had been refused before, it would be very unwise of the Committee to press this matter further. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said truly that it would have been very inadvisable to allow these ships, under all the circumstances of the case, to pass into other hands and so disturb that balance of naval power which we had endeavoured to keep. For these reasons, he considered that the Government were perfectly justified in entering into the bargain; and after the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he did not believe that the country would suffer financially from the purchase, because the right hon. Gentleman had given a distinct engagement that these two ships should take the place of two other ships which would otherwise have been built. Having regard to all the circumstances, therefore, he thought not only that the Government were right in purchasing the ships, but that they would have been wrong if they had not purchased them.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought the Committee should consider this matter a little more carefully than it was being considered. The Prime Minister on this point had, in the previous year, said in answer to a Question put by the hon. Member for King's Lynn—

> "The important point to which the hon. Member calls attention has been considered, and carefully considered, by the Admiralty and they have come to the conclusion that the ships offered for sale are not suitable for their purpose and it would not be wise to buy them."

That was an emphatic and clear statement and he was greatly astonished when he read in the newspapers the account of the purchase of these ships, and he felt greatly astonished still on two grounds. The first was that the Estimates submitted that year for the purposes of the Navy were the largest ever submitted, and the second was that the whole increase in those Estimates was taken for the building of ships on Vote 8, which was £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 higher than ever before. Whatever was the situation when these Estimates were taken, there was one of the most serious financial crises impending that this country had ever had to deal with. He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been more clear on this point. We had not the money to buy the ships with, and with the prospect of a deficit it was a very grave responsibility for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to add these large Supplementary Estimates to the amount already voted. No real explanation had been given on any of these Estimates. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that enough money had not been taken for the repairs of ships on foreign stations. If only necessary repairs had been included in a Supplementary Estimate he did not think the Committee would have raised any serious objection, but to swell the Estimates by so large an amount as was now proposed was perfectly unreasonable. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had stated that the Estimates next year would be reduced by the amount paid for these two ships.

Mr. RITCHIE said that what he stated was that he understood a distinct pledge had been given that these two ships would take the place of two others which would otherwise have been built in the future. He did not say next year.

Mr. LOUGH pressed for as distinct a pledge as possible on the point. They did not want this expenditure of £2,000,000 to be added without it making any impression on the expenditure of next year. In addition to an assurance on that point, he hoped the Secretary to the Admiralty would state definitely on whose authority the Prime Minister declared that the ships were not suitable for the purposes of the Navy.

Mr. PRETYMAN said he had to reply somewhat under difficulty, but perhaps the House would extend to him their indulgence. The opening remarks of the hon. Member for Dundee were entirely directed to the question of economy, and the impression left on his mind was that the hon. Member was unwilling to grant to the Navy sums of money which the Board of Admiralty considered absolutely necessary if the Fleet was to be kept in the state of efficiency demanded by Parliament. The cry for economy could be accepted only subject to the standard which Parliament itself had set. That standard was that the Navy should be kept up to a position of equality with that of any other two Powers. Nobody realised more than the Admiralty how heavy were the demands they made on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the country, but he could assure the Committee that those demands were made with a full sense of responsibility, and that nothing was asked for which was not considered absolutely necessary. With regard to the purchase of the "Triumph" and the "Swiftsure" from the Chilian Government, he thought the Committee would agree that it was really an economical transaction, because, if they kept to the two-Power standard, it was evident that if those two ships had been purchased by any European Power whose fleet had to be taken into calculation in considering that standard, it would not only have entailed the construction of two similar ships by this country, but it would have counted four on a division. As to the payment of the money, the first instalment of £707,000 was due this year, and the balance of the £1,875,000 was due next year. These were the payments which fell due under the contract. What the Admiralty had actually purchased was not two completed ships, but the benefit of a contract to build two ships, and the terms of that contract entailed upon this country the payment of £707,000 during the present financial year, and the balance during the next financial year.

Mr. LOUGH asked whether the Admiralty were buying at the exact price for which the Chilian Government contracted?

Mr. PRETYMAN said they were not, as the ships were contracted for for

£2,200,000. With regard to the answer given by the Prime Minister, of which not unnaturally a great deal had been made, he would say at once that the Admiralty accepted full responsibility. He agreed with what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon as to what passed with regard to those ships. He was quite willing to allow that the expression used was perhaps a little too strong and a little too abbreviated. What was in the mind of the Admiralty was that the ships were not suited to our purposes in themselves, because they were not of the pattern of our Fleet, That was a point to which the Admiralty attached great importance. But it would be perfectly clear to the Committee that many considerations had to be weighed one against another. And at that time the balance was against purchasing these ships. But although the ships were not entirely suitable for the British Navy it was obvious that different circumstances might justify the Admiralty in deciding to purchase something as a special bargain which was not "entirely suitable," and under these changed conditions a decision was come to that the ships should be purchased. He thought a little more had been made of the matter than was really warranted by the circumstances of the case. The effect of the transaction upon this year's Estimates was perfectly clear. It meant an addition of £707,000. The effect upon next year's Estimates would be to add the balance of about £1,100,000.

Mr. LOUGH asked whether any further expenditure would be necessary to complete the ships.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that the entire cost of ships to the nation would be £1,875,000. That included the armament, and the last payment was actually due on the 1st August. Then as to the effect upon next year's programme. The Admiralty had intended to lay down three battleships at the beginning of April. Instead of laying down those three battleships at the commencement of the financial year they proposed to lay down two battleships, but not to commence them until the autumn. That would mean a saving of several months cost of construction on the whole of three battleships and the entire saving of one ship. The Admiralty hoped that it might be possible to leave out two ships, but they did not desire to pledge themselves beyond the extent he had stated. It should be borne in mind that the whole saving would not come into one year only. One battleship was entirely omitted, and the Admiralty had bought two excellent battleships at a price which did not exceed the cost of building two armoured cruisers. They had therefore really obtained two battleships fit to place in the line of battle at the cost of two armoured cruisers, and that would save them building, at any rate, one battleship at a cost of £1,250,000.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked, in order that the matter should be quite clear, whether, instead of laying down three new battleships on the 1st of April, none would then be laid down, but that two would be laid down in the autumn, and in certain contingencies only one.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that was not so. Three battleships were to have been laid down early in April; now there would be only two laid down, and they would not be laid down until the autumn.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) understood the hon. Member to say that another one might be dropped.

Mr. PRETYMAN said he meant not this year, but in the future. It was not considered wise to drop more than the one in one year. The ships were of good quality and compared very favourably with other vessels in the Navy. The final completion of the ships and their availability for service was really governed by the time within which their ammunition could be raised, and that would not be until June. The ammunition had had to be prepared to the order of the Admiralty.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether it had been necessary to make some alteration.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that there was no ammunition ready for these ships. Whatever ammunition the Admiralty had ordered would not be ready before June, and they had ordered, not nitro-cellulose powder, but cordite, as it would have been most objectionable, seeing that our ships had to be ready to serve in any quarter of the world, and for that it was necessary that there should be reserves of ammunition, if the Admiralty had introduced an entirely new kind of powder. The use of cordite entailed a loss of some eighty foot-seconds in initial velocity, but it was perfectly suitable for these guns. The 7·5 guns were the same essentially as the 7·5 guns would be in our new ships, and the ammunition would be interchangeable.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES understood, then, that they had had to alter their cordite.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that was not so. If they used the very best sized cordite they would obtain the same velocity as by using nitro-cellulose, but by using a size of cordite which was not entirely suitable they only lost about ninety foot seconds of velocity, and they could use the pattern which they already had in stock.

With regard to contract work, on the point raised by the hon. Member for Devonport, he would remind the Committee that the estimates made in the dockyards were made after opening up the ship, whereas the estimates made by contractors were made before the ships could be opened up. Anybody who had had anything to do with the repair or construction of ships would agree that an estimate of the repairs necessary to a great battleship made before her machinery and boilers had been opened up could be only a matter of guesswork. The Admiralty, therefore, acknowledged that estimates made beforehand for work in contractors' yards could not be absolutely reliable. Consequently they had taken other measures to secure economy, and they were perfectly satisfied that extra cost was not involved to any appreciable amount, if at all, as compared with the work done in the dockyards. The extra cost was due to the fact that when the ships were opened up, the amount of repairs estimated turned out in many cases to be considerably under the mark, and much more work had had to be done. Another reason was much more satisfactory. For several years the amount of work for which money had been provided had not been completed during the financial year, and the money thus saved was available under the present system of accounts for unforeseen expenditure in other directions. It was satisfactory to note that this year the work in the dockyards and by the contractors had been fully up to the requirements laid down for the twelve months, and their capacity of output appeared fully to meet the requirements of the Navy. That was a satisfactory state of affairs, but it had this result—that money with which in former years they had been able to meet unforeseen expenditure had not been forthcoming this year, and hence they were obliged to bring in a Supplementary Estimate.

**Sir EDWARD REED* (Cardiff) said as he had been responsible for these Chilian ships from their initiation he should like to say a few words about their purchase. When the Chilian Government made their treaty with Argentina they naturally proceeded at once to endeavour to sell the ships, and they applied in the first place to the British Admiralty. The ships had then been only recently commenced. He knew that it was the idlest possible thing to attempt to sell ships, just commenced, to the British Government because, were the Admiralty to fall in with such proposals, the House of Commons would naturally say, "If you wanted the ships why did you not put them into your own programme? Why do you wish to buy from other people ships which have been only just commenced?" In making that refusal the Admiralty had to give a reason, and they stated that the ships were not suitable for the British Navy. That remark caused him no anxiety, because he knew there were reasons which were perfectly valid why the ships should not be suitable for the British Navy at that time. They had a very special armament. They were equipped with 7½-inch guns, and they were supplied with Yarrow boilers. The Admiralty had, however, since made use of such guns and boilers, so that the old objection no longer existed. With regard to the point that had been raised as to the use of cordite in the guns of these ships, he could say that they were perfectly suited for the use of cordite powder; in fact, all the gun trials had been carried out with cordite. As to the quality of these ships, in the first place, they were the fastest battleships we had, and, in the second place, they had an armament of so much power that, if it was valued in the correct manner, they had actually greater gun power than any other battleship in our Navy. The Admiralty had for many years past been in the habit, in calculating the broadside power of their ships, of putting the four guns in the two turrets on one broadside. Although it was perfectly true that a ship could in certain cases use both her turrets on the same side, it was obviously most misleading to calculate as part of the broadside the whole of the guns in the turrets. Surely the most proper and scientific way was to place one-half of the guns on one side of the ship and one-half on the other. Taking the muzzle energy of the guns of these ships, ascertained by multiplying the weight of the shot by the velocity with which it left the gun, he found that the figure which expressed the striking force of these ships on each broadside was 138,960, while the figure which expressed the striking force of the "King Edward VII."—a ship of 16,350 tons, while these ships were under 12,000 tons—came out at 138,700. The figure in the case of the "Duncan" was 104,000, and in the case of the "Canopus" 88,000. Therefore, the House might rest quite satisfied as to the fighting capabilities of these ships. As to the price of the ships, the price at which alone he could obtain them from the builders, under the keenest competition, was a very high price, for the reason that they were to be finished in eighteen months. It had been said that no reduction in price was obtainable when the proposal to sell was first made. That was so true that not four months ago the Chilian Minister assured him that he had not obtained permission from his Government to sell the ships for anything less than the price at which they were being constructed, and the change in their position was brought about quite recently. Whatever might be said or thought of the price, there was the satisfaction of knowing that these ships would be economical in the working, because instead of having to drive ships of 16,000 or 15,000 tons through the sea at high speed, it would only be necessary to drive ships of less than 12,000 tons.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said the hon. Member for West Islington had stated that these ships were "black sheep," and therefore unfit to take their places in the British Navy.

MR. LOUGH: Black sheep are often very good.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS said that was not the impression given by the hon. Member's remarks. The Committee should bear in mind the principle on which their ships of the Navy were built. So many of the different classes were laid down in order to make a homogeneous whole. Therefore if two extra ships of a particular class were introduced they were in that sense unsuitable, as they could not form part of the general scheme.

SIR EDWARD REED: If the ships steam alike, turn alike, and fight alike, what is the object of calling them "black sheep"?

MR. REGINALD LUCAS contended that as these ships were not designed on the same lines they could not be regarded as belonging to the same class as other ships. In reply to the hon. Member for West Islington, who had suggested that the ships were unnecessary, and that their purchase was a waste of public money, he would put as an analogy the defects which existed in our military organisation in 1898, and which would never have been discovered but for the war. Surely in time of peace they should prepare for any emergency that might arise. The hon. Member for Devonport seemed to suggest that there was no emergency for the purchase. He envied the hon. Member the serene atmosphere in which he lived, or else he admired the confidence shown by him that His Majesty's Government would avoid every conceivable contingency which might arise in the future. He was rather curious to know what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean would say when he knew that another ship had been dropped out of the naval programme. He confessed that he learned with some apprehension that this very valuable addition to our Navy was to receive a set off by the fact that other battleships were to be dropped. He wished to know on what principle His Majesty's ships were fitted with electricity.

*The CHAIRMAN said it was not in order to discuss that matter. There was no Vote for that in the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. REGINALD LUCAS desired to know what were intended to be the duties of the Fleet Reserve as compared with the dockyard labourers.

*The CHAIRMAN said this was also a matter which it would not be in order to discuss at present.

*Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said he was sure the House must be satisfied with much of the information as to the battleships purchased last year. They were powerful vessels, well designed, and it was obvious that they were cheap. Up to the present they had not been told when they would be delivered.

Mr. PRETYMAN: I said the vessels would be ready in a month but that their ammunition would not be ready until June.

*Mr. RUNCIMAN said that made the purchase all the more satisfactory. But the hon. Gentleman did not justify the purchase by stating that the Admiralty were still working up to the two-Power standard. Last year it was made evident on the Estimates that the Admiralty were working on the two-Power standard in battleships, and three-Power standard in cruisers. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman, when the Estimates were introduced, would not attempt to persuade the House that the Admiralty were working on a two-Power standard. Of course they were anxious to know what the effect of this purchase would be on the new programme, and he thought they might take by the forecast which had been given that the Admiralty would save to the extent of a second instalment on these vessels by dropping one battleship out of the programme. He took it, therefore, that they counted on two battleships next year at a somewhat later date and that they would be able to diminish the Construction Vote by £1,200,000. If that were so, the Committee, he knew, would view the Vote with great satisfaction. On the Supplementary Votes now before the Committee the increase had been enormous. The precedent set that day by bringing in the Supplementary Estimates for the Navy was singularly bad. The wages for men had gone up by £29,000. That meant a large increase in this Vote for 1903–4 over 1902–3, while the total increase over last year on the next item was as much as £73,000. When they came to contract work they had a more serious item. Repairs and alterations on ships by contracts was for 1902–3 only £175,000, but they found the revised Estimate of the year came to nearly £1,000,000. That was an enormous increase which had only been partially explained by the Secretary. No doubt a very large amount of this was due to the fact that the repairs that used to be done in the dockyards were now let out to private contractors, and also because the Admiralty had had to replace many internal fittings and boilers, provide new engines, and to alter to some extent the armaments. There was scarcely a department in which they had not had to make renewals in the case of vessels which were new only a few years ago. He asked to what extent re-boilering had gone. They had heard that the Yarrow boilers formed one of the stumbling blocks of the Admiralty in connection particularly with the last two purchases. The Committee wished to know how far the Admiralty had changed their opinion about the Yarrow and the Belleville boilers, also how much of the sum expended on repairs went in re-tubing, how much in altering engines. It had been stated that one reason for the increase in the cost of repairs was that the vessels came back from long voyages and that, therefore, they unexpectedly required more repairs than could have been anticipated. But vessels had been coming back from long voyages ever since the Admiralty were created. If the truth were known, it would be found that a very large amount of the increase was due to the fact that the Admiralty had been placing the repairs to be done in private dockyards on the "time and material" basis. Private dockyards had been given not an absolutely but a comparatively free hand, and they had been allowed to add a percentage on the turnover. If adopted indiscriminately that was a thoroughly unsound and unbusinesslike proceeding. It had been stated it was impossible to contract for repairs. Anyone who knew much about vessels knew that was only comparatively true. There was a large amount of renewals that could be contracted for, and there was no reason why a better system should be adopted than that of giving a percentage on the costs of all repairs. It was a system that must lead to increased charges. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said quicker work was done by private dockyards. Of course quicker work was done, because the owner of a private dockyard, who was paid a percentage on the turnover, would be a fool if he did not turn out the work quickly. He would urge upon the Secretary of the Admiralty that they should be cautious at the present time and that they should not hasten any of their new schemes or rush into the adoption of new methods, new materials, new guns, and new boilers, until they had considered the experience of the present war in the Far East. By doing so they might be able to reduce the Estimates without reducing the efficiency of the Fleet in succeeding years.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said these Estimates were, with one exception, the largest produced during the last twenty years, and ought on that account to be fully considered by everyone who was anxious to promote economy. Supplementary Estimates in their essence were estimates that tended to encourage extravagant expenditure, and they did not give the House that accurate and strict control over expenditure which they had when criticising the ordinary Estimates of the year. During time of war it might be excusable, but in time of peace it was inexcusable that there should be higher Supplementary Estimates than on previous records. When he sat on the Committee on National Expenditure, Supplementary Estimates received a great deal of attention, and it was felt by that Committee, and embodied in their Report, that it was necessary that these Supplementary Estimates should undergo a good deal of criticism before they were presented to the House. It would be a great advantage in discussing Votes like those before the Committee during the past two days, if they had some statement by a Committee of the House with reference to the cause of excessive extra expenditure. A precedent established the previous day by the right hon. Gentlemen the Secretary for War, in making a general statement when laying the Supplementary Estimates before the Committee, was one he should like to see extended in some form, e.g. by a Report from the Public Accounts Committee or some other similar Committee, which had considered and enquired into the Estimates before their presentation to the House. If that were done, and it ought to be done, it would make for efficiency and economy There were certain proceeds from sales of old stores on which the Estimates had been reduced. These sales had brought £38,000 more than estimated, and that sum had been brought in to reduce these Estimates. He was afraid that sometimes in the sale of these stores the Government did not get value for their money, although that did not happen probably so often in the Navy as in the Army. In the purchase of the Chilian battleships, he thought they had got value for their money. There was, however, a tendency to lose public money by over-haste or carelessness in looking after public property. A remarkable instance of that occurred last autumn under his own personal observation. When the Channel Fleet was at St. Andrews, in September last, an unfortunate accident happened which resulted in the loss of a steam launch. On 19th September it ran ashore on the rocks, in a position in which the crew had little or no difficulty in landing. That launch was an admirable little vessel, some thirty or forty feet long, and must have cost some thousands of pounds. The Fleet sailed the very same day although the "Sutlej" was left in the bay to look after her launch. He was told that some engines were removed from the launch, but when he saw her the next day, almost high and dry, there was scarcely any damage done to the hull. The British Fleet sailed away and left the ship and her crew, who failed to move her off the rocks and so save her for the nation. He was told that the launch was sold for £110. The purchaser patched her up in a few days, and found no difficulty in getting her off the rocks on 3rd October, and taking her into St. Andrews harbour, where she was sold, according to his information, for £800, although she cost probably some thousands. He thought it was something approaching a scandal that a launch like that should have been lost on a friendly coast and no sustained attempt made to save her. A fisherman told him that if it had been one of their own fishing boats they would have had her off the rocks practically without any damage. It was not creditable to the Fleet, and indicated a slackness on the part of the naval officers and the handy-men of the Navy. The hon. Gentleman should, not only in the interests of the public purse, but of the reputation of the Navy, make a thorough inquiry into this discreditable incident so that such an occurrence should not happen again.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought the right hon. Gentleman had been somewhat hard on the men connected with the steam launch. It was quite impossible to judge of a case like that unless they had the full facts before them as to weather, etc. He admitted that the naval sailor was not a very good beach-man, but he could not believe that some effort had not been made to save a steam launch of that sort. The hon. Member opposite had commented on the system by which the Admiralty got their repairs done by contract. The Admiralty had always been most unfortunate in regard to their contracts; and the reason was that the Admiralty never knew its own mind. When they made a contract for a ship or repairs, before these were completed the Admiralty made some alteration in the plans. That was the reason why they had never been able to obtain penalties for non-fulfilment of contracts. As a matter of fact the Admiralty had given up any idea of recovering any penalties for anything except——

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is wandering outside the Vote.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that his remarks might come under repairs but he would not pursue the subject. A great deal had been said about the purchase of the Chilian battleships. It was now put forward that there was some gain in the price for which they had been purchased, and not because they were not suitable. His own belief was that they were not purchased last year because the then Chancellor of the Exchequer would not agree to the deal; and that now the question of unsuitability had been given up. What was the price at which these ships were offered to the British Government by the Chilian Government in March last?

Mr. PRETYMAN said that the Government never had any offer at that time lower than the price at which the ships had been built. The hon. Member for Cardiff had stated of his own knowledge that the Chilian Government had not authorised the sale for anything less than the contract price.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that, as he understood, the agents of the Chilian Government bought the ships themselves for Chili, and then re-sold them to our Government: with the result that we had got them for practically £400,000 less than we could have done last year.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said that his hon. friend had asked whether the large amount required in the Supplementary Estimates for repairs was due to the system under which the Admiralty was working. Any business man knew that the system which really existed was likely to lead to a great deal of expenditure in the nature of waste. He understood the hon. Gentleman to say that, at any rate, some of the repair work was being done on terms of 5 or 10 per cent. being paid to private dockyards on their time and materials. It was within his knowledge that a number of these yards were working both night and day on this work. He imagined that all these highly-skilled work men had to be paid double time for night work, and that would be a very substantial increase on the cost of day work. Were these private firms sending in sheets of overtime, and, if so, were they being accepted by the Admiralty? He would also ask with reference to repairs to the boilers on these ships. The House and the Committee had experienced a great loss by the death of Sir William Allan, who was so great an expert on these matters, and it would be a great misfortune if they had no one in the House to take the place of that gentleman, and question the Government on this matter. The chief part of the discussion that afternoon had reference to the purchase of the two Chilian warships. Personally, he was pleased to hear that the purchase would go in the reduction of their future shipbuilding programme, and in that sense it would not be an additional expense on the national finances. They felt that the Government, as a whole, did not appear to realise that after all there was a greater thing to consider than the naval superiority and the military superiority, and that was the financial superiority of the country. If it ever came to a trial between this nation and other nations the crucial point would arise on the financial question. We could not go on with the national expenditure as it was now in times of peace and yet secure the reserve that we should require if a crisis arose. He was especially glad to have the assurance from the Secretary to the Admiralty that the Government had declared their intention that the purchase of these ships would not be considered an additional burden to the Exchequer and the taxpayers.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs) said the question of ship repairs was a most difficult thing to deal with. When the Admiralty sent a ship to a private yard for repairs; if the shipbuilder knew what was best he took care to quote a price sufficient to cover any extra details that might arise. In dealing with a shipbuilder the Admiralty must put themselves entirely in his hands, contented themselves with checking the details of the work by means of overseers, and let the shipbuilder render his bill for materials and wages and take a commission. From his own experience as a member of a shipbuilding firm they never executed repairs on any other system. The Admiralty officials could tell what the cost of repairs would be by comparing them to somewhat similar repairs executed at the Royal Dockyards. If they were dealing with men they could trust they might leave themselves in the hands of those men and they would never have any reason to complain. Personally he never did any work for the Admiralty for the reason that if he did he would render himself liable to a penalty of £500 for every division in which he took part. In conclusion he was convinced that assuming the work to be given out was handed to a man who could be trusted, it was the best thing for the Admiralty.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the net result of a long debate seemed to have been that the whole Committee had come either to regard with approval, or at all events with resignation, the purchase of these two Chilian warships. Even those who did not approve of the purchase were quite inclined to be friendly with it because it caused the recent Hertfordshire election. In taking Naval Estimates they were unable to discuss other expenditure. Last year in the course of their Naval, Military, and Budget debates they found it impossible to separate the consideration of military and naval expenditure. They would not be in order that day if they referred to a pledge given by the Government to reduce their military expenditure because of the increased cost of the Navy, but he trusted that the pledge would not be departed from in the current year. He agreed with the hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Whitley) that there was a large and a very rapidly increasing item in the original estimate for repairs, which he could not but help thinking was due to the extraordinarily large number of breakdowns in the cruisers. He had never been inclined to fall in with the attacks on the water-tube boilers, because all other Navies, and especially those advanced in scientific views, were more and more adopting that class of boiler, and were using an older type even than that we had rejected. In his view the root of the whole question was to be found in the training of the stokers and engineers. He desired to know how far breakdowns were responsible for this very large increase in the cost of repairs.

Mr. PRETYMAN said in answer to the right hon. Baronet's Question he must freely admit that a large portion of the cost was due to repairs to the machinery and boilers of cruisers. Two of the largest items were in respect of the renewal of machinery and Belleville boilers and of the rather heavy expenditure incurred in fitting up certain old vessels for auxiliary purposes. The amount of work in those cases was much more than was anticipated. Experiments on Belleville boilers had been entered upon on too large a scale, and it was the fact that trouble was caused by the placing of the new machinery in the hands of men who had not been thoroughly instructed in the matter. It had to be remembered, however, that the very large increase in the cost of repairs in this particular year did not involve a permanent increase. This was a special occasion, and he hoped, when they came to the discussion of Vote 8, to be able to satisfy the Committee that the number of ships to be sent for repair next year would be very largely reduced. In fact, they were only going to send four ships to be repaired in the course of the next financial year. With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Dewsbury he thought the hon. Gentleman had a little misrepresented the object of sending Admiralty repair work to contractors. It was said the work would be more quickly done, but that simply meant that when there was a large amount of work to be done it could be effected more quickly if a part of it were sent to private yards than if the whole was kept for the dockyards. The advantages of the contract system were that the Admiralty only paid for the work actually done, and actually necessary, and they got it done in the most reasonable time. The disadvantage was that they were obliged by the nature of the work to give it out without having a specific lump sum estimate at the time the contract was given out. In order to meet that disadvantage, a system of percentages was introduced. There was a charge for material and labour, all the work being under the close supervision of the Admiralty inspector; no work was undertaken unless with the authority of the Admiralty inspector, who also supervised the amount of labour and materials put into any contract. There was not any question of overtime. The Admiralty paid the usual rate of wages. The Admiralty paid for no extra time whatever. On the work done there was a percentage of about 10 per cent. on materials, and about 35 per cent. on direct wages. Those percentages included profit, but they also covered indirect charges, such as the use of machinery, drawing of plans, etc. That was a business arrangement not peculiar to the Admiralty. It was entered into by the Oceanic Steam Navigation Company, the White Star Line, the Hamburg American Company, the Union Castle Line, and many others. They were not firms likely to throw their money away. The Admiralty, as the result of the experiment they had made, had succeeded in introducing the competitive element. Having arrived at a basis of percentage by experience, they had placed two large ships out to be repaired, after inviting different firms to tender on the basis of percentages upon actual labour and materials. They were taking a further precaution, and that was, after the work was completed, to have a careful estimate made by the officers of the dockyards as to what it would have cost had it been done in the dockyard instead of in a private yard. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for the Ilkeston division of Derbyshire his hon. friend had been kind enough to allow him to postpone his answer, as he had only recently had notice of the matter. He did not think the incident referred to showed the British Navy to be in a decadent state.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said there was not an exact parallel between private shipowners and the Admiralty, because there was often a close relation between the firms in question and the repairing firms, whereas no such relation existed between the Admiralty and their contractors. He asked whether the Admiralty paid for night work in a private yard when work was going on night and day.

MR. PRETYMAN: Certainly, if the work is required to be done by night, but no night work has been required.

MR. RUNCIMAN said night work had been carried on in private yards.

MR. PRETYMAN said he was not aware of the fact.

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said he could not see that there was any difference between the relations of private shipowners and the repairing firms and those of the Admiralty and their contractors, when all parties worked under a similar system. The arrangement made by the Admiralty for the repair of their ships in private yards was such as his firm had adopted for many years in the case of large shipowners, and he failed to see why the Admiralty should not be satisfied with the system. His firm had built and repaired ships on this principle for more than twenty years. The hon. Member had asked whether the Admiralty paid for night work. Of course the wages bill of the contractor would include extra pay for overtime. He believed the arrangement had worked very satisfactorily. It was clear that until a ship was opened out for repairs or alteration they could never tell exactly what was wanted, and any shipbuilder asked to send in a price under such circumstances would be likely to put his estimate in excess of the work which would have to be done. He hoped the Admiralty would continue this arrangement, not only in repairing but building ships.

*MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.) said that although Ireland was called upon to pay a share of the cost of our Navy he found that when work had to be executed Ireland was generally ignored. A short time ago he received a communication from a number of workmen who had been thrown out owing to work in one of the Irish dockyards having been stopped, and although he had written to the Admiralty on the subject he had received no reply. He thought that when the amount spent on repairs had been increased it was not unfair that the taxpayers of Ireland should get some of it back in the shape of wages.

*THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the complaint that none of the money was spent in Ireland could not be made on this Supplementary Estimate, and that the hon. Member must wait until the Naval Estimates came on if he desired to enter into that.

*MR. CREAN said in that case he would not pursue the matter further. He agreed that the contract work could not be better done than in the way the Admiralty did it. The system of having a tender on scheduled prices was the best way in which the work could be done. He could not now go into the details as to where the work was done, but at the same time he hoped on another occasion he would receive more courtesy and attention from the Admiralty than he received on the last on which he had to approach them.

MR. PRETYMAN said he was extremely sorry that the hon. Gentleman had not received any reply to the letter he had sent, and if the hon. Member would send another letter to him personally it should have his attention. It was the desire of the Admiralty to give work to the Irish yards, and the hon. Member would see, when the Estimates came before the House, that that question had not been forgotten.

Vote agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz.:—

	£
Vote 1. Pay, &c. of the Army	2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts - - -	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies - - -	2,030,000
Total - -	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations in Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10)	3,430,000
	£2,700,000 "

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) drew attention to the difference in the form in which this Vote was presented to the House from that of the Vote which had just preceded it. He pointed out that in the Supplementary Vote for the Navy, it first of all gave the amount of the Supplementary Estimate, and immediately underneath that was the amount of the whole Estimate required. This, he pointed out, was an infinite convenience to hon. Members who desired to criticise these Estimates, and he trusted that on a future occasion, which he hoped would never occur, when the War Office required to present a Supplementary Estimate, they would present it in the form adopted by the Admiralty. The sum asked for by this Vote was £150,000 for the Imperial Yeomanry. The Financial Secretary had stated that he had put down a certain sum on the Paper as the total sum. He (Mr. Hobhouse) had put a reduction on the Paper as a protest against the principle adopted in the Supplementary Vote. The amount asked for the Imperial Yeomanry in the year 1902 was £1,350,000, and the year 1902–3 £1,300,000. Then a Supplementary Vote for £750,000 was asked for, and in 1903–4 a sum of £10,000 was put down, and now the hon. Gentleman came and asked for a Supplementary Vote for £150,000. The total sum asked for in the whole period on the Estimates was £3,750,000, of which 33 per cent. was taken upon Supplementary Votes. That disclosed a very undesirable state of things, because in future they would not be sure that the amounts presented to the House in the Estimates would be all that was required. He thought it would greatly lighten the task of the War Office if they presented all that was required in one Estimate. He complained that a good deal of the difficulty which arose over the Yeomanry accounts was due to the fact that 35,000 men were sent to South Africa with an insufficient number of paymasters to keep their accounts for them, there being only two to keep the whole of the accounts of the Yeomanry. These Yeomanry were enlisted for a term of service of either a year or for the whole period of the war. Some were enlisted in the winter of 1902. There could be no pretext for putting forward this account that there were still existing in the service any relics of an organised Imperial Yeomanry Corps, and it must be that these accounts had not yet been disentangled from the mass of documents at the War Office. If the matter stopped there, he should not say anything further, but out of the total number of Yeomanry a very considerable portion—not less than 2,000 or 3,000—never left these shores at all. Some of them were enlisted in the London district, but they never went out of the country. One thousand of them the moment they got to South Africa were shipped back again. Consequently they had been paying 5s. a day for some 2,500 men who never took part in the war. They were all fitted out in the most costly manner and remained at Aldershot some time and were afterwards disbanded. Some of the methods adopted as shown in the Blue-book were worth mentioning. Some of the Yeomanry were enlisted by the hall porter at the War Office. Others obtained forms from the same hall porter, filled them up, and in return were given commissions. All this was proved by the evidence in the Blue-book, and it did not reflect credit upon the War Office. This was all given in the evidence of Major Knight in answer to question No. 7170. In the case of one man who was enlisted the only thing he could do was to play the piano and he refused to get on a horse at all. Several officers arrived drunk without their drafts, and 184 officers were sent off out of 530.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.) asked if it were relevant on this Vote to discuss the whole of the organisation in regard to the war.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I was going to ask the hon. Member if he maintained that the pay of these individuals came on the Vote; otherwise his observations would not be relevant.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said it was impossible for him to say whether the pay of a particular officer was included in this Vote or not.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member ought not therefore to refer to particular instances.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said there was £150,000 in the Vote for the pay of the Imperial Yeomanry, and it was impossible for a person in the House to say to what individual items it referred. All they knew was that it referred to the Imperial Yeomanry.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot refer to individual cases. He is entitled to comment upon the money spent and the rate of pay, but he is not entitled to bring in individual cases.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he should not have done so only he was challenged by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. A great deal of the confusion of the accounts was consequent upon sending out the Yeomanry in a very haphazard manner. One squadron was put upon one ship, and another on another ship, and upon arrival in South Africa they never saw each other until they came home. If troops were sent out in this higgledy-piggledy fashion there must be confusion in the accounts. Consequently delay in paying the men who had earned the money ensued, and the financial control of the War Office was reduced to a farce, and gave no satisfaction to anybody concerned. He moved a reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head F (C), Pay, &c. of the Corps of Imperial Yeomanry (South Africa), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that yesterday on a former Vote the excuse was made that the accounts could not be got in because of negotiations with the Colonies, and certain claims were made which took time to decide. There was, however, nothing of the kind in this case, because the men had been home for eighteen months. He knew one great difficulty was that there were no paymasters, and the accounts might have gone in to the wrong person, but that was entirely the fault of the War Office. As far as these men were concerned it appeared that all their accounts must have been in about eighteen months ago. It was said that the officers did not send in the accounts properly, but that again was the fault of the War Office, because they sent out officers before they had learned any of their duties. Naturally, there was a great deal of confusion in consequence. He thought they ought to protest against such gross negligence. This was not the original wiping out, but the second wiping out and finishing off of the business. They wished to know if this merely round sum, which was not the actual amount required, would finish off these payments. He could not understand how the War Office could now have accounts coming in from persons who ought to have ceased to draw pay more than twelve months ago. This was the kind of accounts which the War Office were very fond of putting in without explanation, and which they could not fathom, and it was apparently for the second batch of Yeomanry. It was the second batch which was so inefficient.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to go into that. I have already given my ruling upon this point.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that some of these cases would naturally come into this Vote, and unless they could get some assurance as to who this Vote applied to, the natural assumption was that it applied to the last batch. He hoped this was the last they would hear of the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa, and that the question of their pay would not be brought up year after year.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said they had had no opportunity until to-day of pointing out how misleading were the accounts presented to them, during the war, on many of the matters in connection with the Imperial Yeomanry. This had been amply proved by the witnesses before the Commission. The whole confusion in these accounts was explained by the facts set forth in the evidence of Lord Chesham and others before the Commission. All this money had been paid long ago. There had been no case of money recently paid for the Yeomanry. As far as he could make out, this large sum left over was an imaginary account, a sort of banking account for money which had been actually paid out. The confusion and delay, in connection with the accounts, was much greater than could be accounted for by mere delay in the making up of regimental accounts for money which was paid eighteen months ago. It was pointed out in the House, over and over again, that the confusion in regard to the Yeomanry arose because the Government had acted in defiance of their own inspector, Colonel Lucas. This was shown by correspondence which had been accidentally laid before the House. It was a correspondence relating to other matters as well, but it showed that the whole of the Yeomanry system broke down because the Government refused to send out drafts. The Prime Minister in this House and Lord Raglan in another place had thrown the whole blame for the confusion on the military commanders in the field, but now the evidence of those commanders showed that Yeomanry were sent out prematurely and when they were unfit for service, and that they were forced upon them against their wish. Then, as regarded officering, it was stated at the time that a large number of officers had been sent home as incompetent. The evidence taken before the Commission showed that that was correct, and that officers were sent home as hopelessly incompetent. He would not develop this question, but as the present was probably the only opportunity they would have of referring to it, he wished to point out to the Committee that every word which he and others had said about the Imperial Yeomanry in the field had been justified to the full by the evidence before the Commission.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said the explanation of this charge was a very simple one. The money taken last year was £2,050,000 and only £1,587,000 could be brought into account before 31st March. Obviously in any other business except the public service, in which the accounts terminated automatically on 31st March, it would not have been necessary to ask for this Vote. With regard to the administration of the Yeomanry by the War Office, he made no apology whatever for the failure of the War Office to employ all the Yeomanry available at the end of the war.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that men sent out to Africa were disbanded as useless in the middle of the war.

MR. BRODRICK said that if the hon. Member supposed that it was possible for the Secretary for War to supervise the training of all the men demanded in such large numbers as they were demanded in South Africa, he must be under a delusion. Special tests were laid down in every case, and the Adjutant-General assured him that those tests had been applied. If it was true that some of the men could not ride or shoot, they must have evaded the tests. The only thing a Minister could do was to see that the tests were imposed which his military advisers considered adequate. He admitted that the second contingent were raised too hastily, and were sent out too hastily. The Government claimed credit for absolute *bonâ fides* in the statement made on the authority of those who advised them, that the war was coming to an end; and hon. Members who believed and frequently stated that that was merely an electioneering cry attacked the Government for not sending out drafts to continue the war, which the Government thought was coming to an end. In 1901 no drafts were raised, as arrangements were being made for all classes of troops to be sent home. Within a fortnight he had to go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for authority to send out fresh troops, and all the mounted men he could lay hands on. Shortly afterwards they began to enlist again for the Yeomanry; and it was in answer to the urgent appeals of Lord Kitchener that men left this country before, in his opinion, they should have gone. There was no doubt that the men were not sufficiently trained, and they gave both Lord Roberts and himself considerable anxiety before they were sent out. When the third contingent of Yeomanry were raised he asked Lord Roberts to certify that every man who left the country was properly trained for the purpose for which he was required, and he did so; and he had no complaint whatever of that contingent. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had attacked the quality of the officers. When in ordinary years 600 to 800 officers were commissioned for the Regular forces and that number increased in 1899 to 1,500, in 1900 to 2,500, and in 1901 to 4,500, did it not stand to reason that when officers had been found with the greatest difficulty for the other forces the choice for the Yeomanry should be much more limited. That had proved what he had long felt—the necessity of having a very much larger reserve of officers than we had had hitherto.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he was not very clear as to this £150,000. When was the money paid? He understood from his right hon. friend that it was paid before the beginning of the present financial year; but if that were so it was very extraordinary that it should come up on the Supplementary Estimates this year. Or, if the men were not paid before 31st March last, he thought it was a gross scandal that they should have been kept fifteen or eighteen months without their money. When the right hon. Gentleman was speaking about the criticism which had been made as to the efficiency of the new Yeomanry, he wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman had read the Report of the War Commission. In that Report Lord Chesham said that of 1,900 Yeomanry under his command, 75 per cent. had never been on a horse before they passed the test, and 25 per cent. had ridden very little. They had never had an opportunity of discussing this matter in the House of Commons; and when criticism was made, the right hon. Gentleman seemed inclined rather to cast the blame upon Lord Kitchener. But Lord Kitchener repudiated responsibility. Fuller explanation ought to be given as to the real nature of this transaction, because it would enable the Committee to understand better War Office finance in the future.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said he thought he could speak with some little authority about this matter at any rate. The facts were as follows. The officer had an account with his men, and afterwards an account with the War Office which paid upon the lists sent in. He admitted that these pay lists were in a state of confusion, and he could not say absolutely that every single man had been paid. It was a fact that it would have been very much better for all the officers concerned, and possibly for the country, if some better provision had been made for the proper payment of the men during the war. That everybody recognised. It must not be forgotten that the first contingent of Yeomanry was despatched from this country under conditions of hurry. He himself happened to be in command of the first squadron which sailed from Great Britain, and he remembered perfectly that he was not ready when they got orders to sail on the following Saturday, and he did so sail under protest. The answer to his protest was that great pressure had been put on the War Office by the authorities in South Africa, and there was an earnest desire and necessity to get the men to the front. It had been asked, why were not the units followed up with drafts? No doubt that would have been better. At first drafts were sent out, but they were not continued, because the Government believed that the war was coming to an end. He could assure the hon. Gentleman who laughed, that the Government did believe the war was coming to an end, and that there were some credulous people in South Africa who believed likewise. He himself, however, had doubts about it; and as a matter of fact he pressed for drafts to fill up his regiment. The second contingent of Yeomanry was sent out. There were some unsuitable men among that body, but there were also a large number of splendid men. A thousand of that contingent were sent to fill up the corps with which he was serving, and he assured the Committee that, speaking generally, they were a very fine lot of men indeed. They could not ride, yet they could shoot extremely well, and for pluck, dash, and determination they were quite equal to the first contingent. They could not ride, but they took to riding with extraordinary aptness. They remained in South Africa for many months, and rendered magnificent service to the Empire. The reason why there had been delay in completing these accounts was that when they came into the War Office they were in confusion. The officers who were sent out had, like himself, no familiarity with regimental accounts, and where they had with them a member of the permanent staff, like a sergeant-major, the accounts were kept pretty straight. But when the sergeant-major was wounded, or sick, or was lost to the unit, nobody was able to take over the pay lists. In the end, therefore, the lists came into the War Office in a state of confusion, and it was inevitable that a long time should be taken to investigate them. Special officers of great ability and experience had unravelled the mystery of these accounts, and the men had been paid, he believed, in all cases. There were, however, sums of money due as gratuities to officers which had been withheld until their accounts had been properly audited. He could assure the Committee that no further item would appear on the Estimates; at any rate it would not come up in the form of a Supplementary Estimate. He believed that this sum of £150,000 was the final settlement of the whole account.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said the speech the hon. Gentleman had just delivered, so far as the Yeomanry was concerned, was satisfactory, but so far as the War Office was concerned it was very unsatisfactory. With regard to the delay in the payment of the Yeomanry the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary had said that in all probability those claims had all been paid before the 31st of March last. If that were so, then what had been outstanding since that date had been the payments due to the officers who had advanced money for the sake of their men. That made it all the more hard to understand the Estimate presented last year and that presented to-night. The Secretary of State for India had told the Committee that on the 31st of March there was £450,000 not paid out of the sum voted last year, and had gone on to state that if the War Office had been any other body than a public department they would have held it over and spent it next year. But the right hon. Gentleman must have known that the full satisfaction of these claims was going on very slowly, and he must have become aware that they had not been able to spend all their money, and that there would be many of these claims outstanding, but the Estimate of the previous year was nothing like the £450,000 now stated to be wanted but an Estimate of £10,000. Would the right hon. Gentleman explain why under those circumstances last year they only asked for the paltry sum of £10,000 and now came to the House with this unaccountable sum of £150,000.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) thought the Committee ought to press for something more definite as to whether the Yeomanry were or were not paid before the 31st of March. He thought the hon. Gentleman was in error in stating that. It was absurd to suppose that the officers advanced money out of their own pockets to pay their men. This discussion had certainly destroyed whatever impression the Committee might have had before as to the soundness of the War Office finance. The Estimates were mere tokens and emblems and represented nothing like what was really required. The one thing which distinguished English finance favourably from that of other countries was the fact that the financial exercise of one year was kept entirely separate from that of the year which followed it. If the guiding idea of English finance were once lost we should lose the accuracy of the Budget.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said he did not pretend to be a pastmaster in these matters, but he really did not think the matter was so involved as hon. Members supposed. These accounts were all rendered, but were not rendered at the time. Some were brought into the Army accounts for the financial year and the others had not been rendered in time for that account.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT: Were these sums paid out of the Treasury in the last financial year or this financial year?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said there was no doubt that they were paid, and therefore it was necessary in the coming year to cover these payments out of the military chest. The hon. Member for Perthshire had asked why it was that the whole of this account was not estimated for at the beginning of the year; that was accounted for by a circumstance with which the hon. Gentleman was well acquainted, namely, that the accounts were rendered up to the end of the year; but the surrender of the actual balance did not take place until the October or even the November following, when settlements were drawn up in the War Office for the October of the preceding year. When the Estimates were framed it was necessary that they should be framed on the knowledge possessed by the War Office. In the War Office it was believed that these claims would have come in and would have been passed before the surrender of the balances. Owing to the complication of the accounts, however, these amounts did not come in for payment at the time that the balances were surrendered. In all these cases the accounts had been passed since the surrender of the balances.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said it appeared to him that there was some little uncertainty about this matter. It was clear now that this £150,000 had been spent in the financial year 1902–3, but had not been brought into the account of the Appropriation Bill for that year. The Committee was now in this strange position, they were asked to transfer this amount of £150,000 which was admittedly spent in the year 1902–3 to the expenditure of the year 1903–4. With regard to the amount of £900,000 referred to on the previous evening. Last year when they passed the Appropriation Account they thought they had thereby prevented any Minister from appropriating any money to any other purpose than that for which it was appropriated. But that it appeared was all moonshine. This £150,000 it appeared was paid out of the military chest, which it seemed to him was an immense suspense account to which the Government had paid money and thus defeated the Appropriation Account. The House having passed that Account thought they had the Government absolutely secure against taking money for any purpose for which no appropriation had been made by that specific act of Parliament, but the Government were in such a position that without the authority of Parliament they were able to find £900,000, pay it away, and then three or four years afterwards come to this House and ask them to sanction that proceeding. Such disclosures as this showed that our financial system was absolutely defective; that the Government had power which Parliament never thought they possessed; and that it was time for them to put their financial house in order.

MR BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he feared the hon. Gentleman was labouring under some error. The procedure was quite common. These men had to be paid week by week out of the money provided by the officers who depended on the paymaster to draw it from the military chest. It could not possibly come into the account until the end of the financial year.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked if this £150,000 was paid by the Treasury into the military chest in 1902–3 was it not treated as expenditure by the Treasury in that year.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT said unless it was regarded as expenditure by the Treasury it was impossible to work from account to account.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said it seemed to him that the whole of the financial affairs of the War Office were in a fashion muddled up. Money was laid out under the exigencies of the moment and they had to discover afterwards where it was to come from. Then they were told that in the pressure of events drafts of Yeomanry were hurried out to the war who could not ride. This disclosed a state of affairs which if it occurred in a commercial undertaking would bring it to a state of bankruptcy within twelve months. In the reorganisation of the War Office the Secretary for War and the Financial Secretary should turn their attention first of all to its financial affairs. In all businesses the whole amendment depended on the finance and if the finances of the War Office were in an orderly state then there would be a good result, but if they were not there would always be a muddle.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER agreed that it was desirable that the finances of the War Office should be put upon a basis which was beyond criticism. He was glad to be able to inform the House that the subject was now being considered with a view to recasting the whole of the finance of the War Office. Hon. Members appeared to think that the explanation which he had made just previously was not very lucid, but what he said in that explanation was absolutely correct although it might not have been quite clear. He was as conscious of the fact that there must be reform in the finance of the War Office as any hon. Member could be and he was endeavouring to reduce the finance of that department to such a condition of simplicity that all would be able to understand it as well as the hon. Member who had just spoken appeared to understand it now. With regard to sending out Yeomanry who were not able to ride, they had a precedent for that; one of the smartest cavalry regiments in the French Army had been made out of an infantry regiment which could not ride, but which after six weeks training became one of the crack cavalry corps in the Army. With regard to the finances of the War Office, active minds were now engaged on the problem and endeavouring to simplify and make them more lucid. That being so, he asked the Committee to say that the matter had been discussed sufficiently and that the Vote might now be taken.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE pressed for the answer to the question of the hon. Member for Exeter, whether the item of £150,000 was accounted for last year.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir, it was not brought into the account last year, it was paid to the soldiers but not accounted for; it was appropriated for another purpose, but used for this.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is really exceedingly unfair to the House of Commons. Here is money appropriated for one purpose which is used for entirely another purpose.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That is done every year.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, I know, but it is time that it was brought to an end.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER thought that the hon. Member was under a misapprehension. When he was at the Admiralty, it was recognised that they might transfer money within the limits of a Vote, by permission of the Treasury.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he understood the money voted last year and paid away for this purpose was about £200,000. If they voted this money again to-night how was it going to be disposed of?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said this Vote was to bring into account money that had already been paid.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE on a point of order asked whether, during the current financial year, a Vote could be asked in respect of sums of money voted in the previous year and paid away. Could there be another Vote this year for the same thing?

*THE CHAIRMAN said he doubted whether this was the first time that this had occurred. It appeared to be a very common process. The money was actually paid out to certain individuals but was not brought into account within the financial year, and the House, in passing this Vote, would be simply sanctioning a payment which had now been finally completed. The completion of the payments and the closing of the accounts took place in the present financial year.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he rose to protest against this Vote being taken now.

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: This is not a question of a Vote. It is a question of a reduction.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I desire to continue this discussion.

MR. SECRETARY ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 190; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 10.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Foster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrmyple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Doulgas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn.J.E(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goulding, Edwd. Alfred
Greene,Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F.Leverton(Tynemouth
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F(Sheffield,Brightside)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth

Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt.Hn.Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt.Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley,Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)

Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H(Ashton und.Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Question put accordingly, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head F (C), Pay, etc., of the Corps of Imperial Yeomanry (South Africa), be reduced by £100."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 122: Noes, 190. (Division List No. 11.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)

Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. K. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Warner.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson. Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Doulgas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Forsescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynemouth
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland

Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ridley, S.Forde (BethnalGreen
Ritchie, Rt. Hn.Chas. Thomson
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isleof Wight
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H.C (North'mb.Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Willoughby, de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

RICKMANSWORTH AND UXBRIDGE VALLEY WATER BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) said he rose on behalf of the Buckingham County Council to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill. It was a matter of great concern to them that an attempt should be again made to seize part of the water area of Buckingham for the supply of water to other places. Not only were the Buckingham County Council opposed to the Bill, but almost every local authority interested in the matter. The Buckingham County Council, the Eton District Council, the Gerards Cross Parish Council, the Hertfordshire County Council, the Rickmansworth District Council, the Thames Conservancy, and the Grand Junction Canal Company had all petitioned the House against this Bill, which they contended would have a very injurious effect if it were allowed to become law. This Bill was practically the same as that promoted in 1901 by the same company, which measure having been discussed on its merits was thrown out without a division. This Bill was objected to by the local authorities, especially by the Bucks County Council, on the ground that no water company should be allowed to take water out of the county unless it was prepared to give water back again, and this undertaking had not been given to the county council. They had little water to spare in Buckinghamshire, and much damage would be done to the wells of some of the poorest if unlimited pumping was allowed. The scheme here was to pump all the water out of Buckingham into Middlesex and Herts, and as the Amersham Water Company were prepared to supply Gerard's Cross, which was the only district that wanted water, and were also prepared to give back to Buckingham whatever water they took from it, the Buckingham County Council was prepared to support that company and not this. He begged to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. ROTHSCHILD (Buckinghamshire, Aylesbury), in seconding the rejection of the Bill, supported the protest that had been made by the local county council. The underground wells and lakes near the Chiltern Hills would suffer great injury if allowed to be depleted of their stores of water in the manner proposed. It had been noticed that when pumping operations had been resorted to, the level of these lakes and wells fell very rapidly. In his opinion the Rickmansworth Company had no right to come into an area and to deplete that area of its water supply, and dispose of all the water in other places, without giving a satisfactory undertaking to the county council concerned.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Disraeli.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said that this matter was an extremely simple one. When the original Bill of 1901 was upstairs before the Committee, it was found that Gerard's Cross, the district in dispute, had been omitted by accident. As a result, the Rickmansworth Company had promised the Board of Trade to remedy that mistake as soon as possible, and this Bill had been brought in in consequence. He hoped the usual course would be adopted of reading the Bill the second time and sending it to a Committee, which was the proper tribunal to decide the points at issue between the two competing water companies.

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last, spoke from instructions, and had therefore only contributed second-hand opinions to the debate. He (Mr. Walton) lived in Buckinghamshire, and could fully endorse what had been said by the hon. Member for Mid-Buckinghamshire as to the Chiltern Hills districts, the well supply of which was very seriously affected by the rainfall, and any tampering with or draining of the underground reservoirs would have a serious effect on the district. He contended that local opinion as to local needs ought to have a deciding influence in a matter of this kind, and this Bill was opposed by all the local authorities concerned.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) supported the Second Reading. He thought the House ought not to reject a Private Bill on its Second Reading unless there were very strong objections to it, and he failed to see such objections in the case of this Bill. In his opinion it should go to a Committee upstairs, where evidence could be taken on both sides, and where arguments could be adduced which could not be heard in this House. Before he voted for the rejection of this Bill, he should like to be assured that no damage would be done to the people who wanted the water which was to be supplied under this Bill.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he thought the hon. Member for Epping was under a misconception with regard to this question. He pointed out that though the Bill of the Rickmansworth Water Company introduced two or three years ago was rejected without a division, the company now came to Parliament with their old weak case, but with a more extended scheme. There was one other point he would like to draw attention to. He thought the time had come when the House ought to appoint a Commission or Committee to inquire into the whole question of water supply. It was monstrous that all the suburban counties should be depleted of their water for the purposes of London and other large places, without some complete scheme showing how much should be taken away and how much should be left in the locality.

Sir JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London) said it had been suggested that there was some ulterior motive in bringing forward this Bill. Well, it was brought forward to remedy an error in a previous Bill and asked for no further powers than the company at present possessed. The Rickmansworth Water Company was opposing the Amersham Company, and the Buckingham County Council was acting the part of the dog-in-the-manger. It was clearly a Bill which ought to be sent upstairs where all the points in dispute could be thoroughly threshed out.

*The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith) said it was very undesirable that these matters, which were purely local, should be discussed in the House; they ought to be referred, almost without question, to a Committee upstairs unless they involved some question of a new principle. The House was asked to found its judgment on purely *ex parte* statements which could not be subjected to the test of cross-examination. What were the merits of the Bill? There seemed to be a quarrel between two water companies as to who should possess a certain district known as Gerard's Cross. The Bill involved no new principle, and that being so he held that that ought to go in the ordinary course before a Committee upstairs.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) submitted that it was the right of the House to express its opinion on all Bills, and he was therefore surprised at the doctrine laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees. In this case an invasion was proposed of the rights of the County of Buckinghamshire over its own area, and it was the privilege of the House to discuss such a question, and to say whether a private company should, in opposition to the wishes of the county council, take water from a given area without any obligation to supply that area with water.

Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said that all the local authorities were opposed to the proposal, and he hoped, therefore, especially in view of the distressed condition of agriculture in Buckinghamshire, they would not be put to the expense which proceedings before a Committee involved.

*Mr. HUDSON (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) said the inhabitants of Hertfordshire feared that if the Bill were passed the result would be that they would be deprived of a much larger quantity of water than the company took already and which might be used in the county of Buckinghamshire. They had suffered from droughts more, perhaps, than any other county in England. Their springs were drying up and already many of them had had to deepen their wells. Hence the opposition of their county council.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) appealed to the House to come to a decision on this Bill, inasmuch as the sitting had been especially set apart for the discussion of a question of vital importance to Ireland—viz., transit facilities — more important, indeed, than the fiscal problems raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. One of the blessings of the present system of Parliamentary Government was that Irish Members were forced, against their will, to come there and decide on the merits of a purely local English question, and he could only say that as they found the local bodies were unanimously on one side in this dispute, it would be their duty to support them.

Sir E. DURNING-LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro) hoped the Bill would be sent upstairs on the ground that the House was not in a position to decide upon the facts in dispute.

Mr. HAROLD RECKITT (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said he thought the districts around London had been most unfairly treated by the demands made upon their water areas for the supply of London, and he felt the House ought to exercise its right, therefore, of expressing its opinion on the general principle of Water Bills. He hoped the day was not far distant when county councils would be made the water authorities in their own areas, and he felt that this was the proper time to make a protest against individual water companies or authorities seeking to take water for their own use, outside their own areas, without any compensation whatsoever.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 24; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 12.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Bond, Edward
Caldwell, James
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Forster, Henry William
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lowther, Rt. Hn. J. W (Cum. Pen
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Colonel Lockwood.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Arrol, Sir William
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Barry, E. (Cork. S.)
Bell, Richard
Bignold, Arthur
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, William Walter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Sir Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gardner, Ernest
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Groves, James Grimble
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq of L'nd'nderry
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Maconochie, A. W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, George Herbert
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Power, Patrick Joseph
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, Henry Charles
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel, Daniel
Sheehy, David
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spear, John Ward
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)

Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Chales Philips
Walton, Jn. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wylie, Alexander
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Rothschild.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

ST. MARYLEBONE ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

IRISH RAILWAY RATES.

*Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork) said he wished to call the attention of the House to the question of transit and railway rates in Ireland; and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, excessive railway rates and defective transit facilities generally constitute a serious bar to the material advancement of Ireland, and should receive immediate attention from the Government." It was a mere truism to say that the railway system of Ireland could, and ought to, help powerfully towards facilitating and developing the prosperity and trade of that country. But he regretted to say that at no time had that railway system been a help. On the contrary it had always been a great hindrance to trade in Ireland. So oppressive, indeed, had it been, that it had made the development of trade in that country impossible. The following figures showed very briefly how railway travelling was discouraged in Ireland, as compared with England and Scotland. In 1880 the average Irish railway rates were higher by 21·83 per cent. than the English, and 27·13 per cent. above the Scotch; in 1890 they were 22·75 per cent. above the English, 29·22 per cent. above the Scotch; in 1900 they were 37·14 per cent. above the English, and 33·97 per cent. above the Scotch. On 15th April, 1902, Mr. Wyndham, who was then Chief Secretary, acknowledged the correctness of these figures. Now, a striking result of these excessive rates charged by the Irish railways was, that while in England each inhabitant made on an average twenty-three journeys yearly, and in Scotland each inhabitant made on an average fifteen journeys per annum, in Ireland the average was only four. If he were to stop here, he should say that he had already made a strong case against the manangement of the railway system in Ireland. But he would proceed. The rates charged by Irish railways on agricultural produce were three-half-pence per ton per mile; on the Continent they were a halfpenny, and in the United States and Canada they were one farthing per ton per mile. He found that the French flax spinners and manufacturers could send their goods from Lille to London for 28s. 9d. per ton, while the Irish flax-spinners and manufacturers had to pay from Belfast to London 42s. 6d. per ton, from Stranorlar to Belfast (86 miles) the rate was 21s. 8d.; but from Ghent, via Goole, Hull or Leith, to Belfast, the rate was 18s. 8d. In Ireland ten barrels of petroleum were carried fifty miles at the same cost as fifteen barrels were carried from New York to Belfast, or to any other Irish port. Sheep were carried from Boston, Mass., to Liverpool or Manchester for 2s. 6d. per head, while from Ireland to Liverpool or Manchester the rate was 4s. per head. A Galway distiller for several years bought annually 1,000 tons of barley, grown in the valley of the Shannon. It was shipped on canal, at various points, for Ballinasloe and thence by railway to Galway. The railway company gave notice of higher charges, and the result was that the distiller now got his barley from Glasgow. A company in county Sligo started pressing peat into bricks for fuel. The place was 150 miles from Dublin or Belfast, and the industry was killed by a railway rate of 11s. per ton. On German lines the rate for that article would not exceed 7s. 3d. per ton for any distance. He must refer to the case of eggs recently noticed in the papers. Eggs were carried from Normandy to London, Birmingham, and Nottingham for 16s. 8d. per ton, from Russia the charge was 22s., from Denmark 24s., while the rate from Galway to the same towns was 94s. per ton, or nearly six times the rate from Normandy. As to transit facilities, an egg merchant in Leigh, near Manchester, writing on 16th February of this year, said that eggs from Claremorris were often nine days in transit. Bone dust for manure was carried in England 120 miles per five tons for 25s.; in Ireland the cost of carriage for twenty miles of the same weight was 20s., or nearly five times as much. In fact, goods were sent to all parts of Ireland from England, the European continent, and America cheaper than goods produced in Ireland were sent to different parts of the same country. The Irish railways gave a preference to goods from foreign countries over Irish goods.

Coming to passenger fares, they knew that the minimum rate in Ireland was a penny per mile per 3rd class passenger. In Prussia the rates were by express trains at forty-four miles an hour, 1st class 1·70d; 2nd class 1·25d; 3rd class 0·88d. On ordinary trains, which ran twenty-five miles an hour, the charges were, 1st class 1½d., 2nd class 1⅛d., 3rd class ¾d., and 4th class ⅜d. per mile. In the same country 4th class return tickets, available for forty-five days, were issued at one farthing per mile, while civil servants, soldiers, and sailors were carried free. If one member of a family took a season ticket at full price, all the other members of the family could get tickets, not necessarily for the same journey or the same class, at half price. This system had naturally created enormous traffic into the large towns. All kinds of facilities and encouragements were given to the public with the very best results, as the following figures showed. In Prussia the railways were State property. In 1899 the total debt on these railways was £370,000,000; and there had been paid off, since 1882, £146,000,000. The profits from 1889 to 1899, inclusive, were £302,000,000. Twenty-one directors managed 21,174 miles of railway, and in 1900 they made a profit of £34,000,000 as against £18,000,000 in 1898. The profit, in fact, had nearly doubled in two years. What a lesson for poor Ireland! In Hungary one could travel 400 miles for 8s; an equal mileage in Ireland cost 33s. 4d. In Austria one could travel ten miles for 6d., 24 miles for 1s., 50 miles for 2s. 6d., 112 miles for 5s., and 180 miles for 7s. 6d.; but in Ireland the lowest charge for 180 miles would be at least 15s. Now he thought he had said enough to justify the terms of his Motion. There were about 3,000 miles of Irish railways managed by a number of directors, variously stated at 135, 169, and 303. He did not know how many separate lines there were, but the number of secretaries stood at ninety-seven, and there were other highly-paid officials, such as solicitors, actuaries, &c., to the number of sixty. Then, each line had a full staff of all kinds, and in the Clearing House, Kildare Street, Dublin, there were 128 clerks. Again, each line had its own rolling stock. What an awful waste was here! But this money waste was not the whole of it. If they compared the Irish lines with the Prussian, which had a mileage of 21,174 miles, they found the latter managed by twenty-one directors; while some English lines, which had a mileage of about 3,000 miles, were managed by one board of some fifteen to twenty directors and one staff. Surely there was something rotten in the State of Denmark so far as Ireland was concerned. These various Irish boards of directors, as might easily be conceived, had no idea of working their lines harmoniously for the good of the country. Indeed, the way in which they had been accustomed to antagonise each other had long been notorious. He, himself, had had experience of it some time ago. He had to travel over the Midland system, and wanted to connect with the Great Southern and Western system at Athlone, and found that the train on the latter system was timed to start from Athlone just two minutes before the other was due. Now, he asked, could any language be strong enough to condemn a system of railway management which, in the poorest country in Europe, charged goods rates 37 per cent. higher than the average English rates, 34 per cent. higher than the Scotch rates, 200 per cent. higher than the Continental rates, and 500 per cent. higher than the United States of America and Canadian rates. The

Irish railway system offered inducements and facilities to producers from all parts of the world to compete on Irish soil with Irish manufacturers on terms favourable to the foreigner. It was oppressive to the Irishman, and handicapped the Irish producer by excessive rates to his principal market, England.

A remedy for such a state of affairs naturally suggested itself, and that was to amalgamate all the railways in Ireland under one common board. The Board of Trade could easily formulate a scheme under which this common board should work all the lines for the benefit of the trade and prosperity of the whole country. And as the scheme would greatly benefit Ireland, that country might fairly be asked to guarantee present incomes to the companies. It is needless to say that the Government should be represented on such a board. In the Irish Parliament, as it existed in 1782 to 1800, the interests of Ireland were looked after, and under the fostering care of that native Parliament, unreformed though it was, and in which only the Protestant minority was represented—even under such a Parliament the trade and prosperity of Ireland made wonderful progress, from which he thought it was safe to conclude that if Ireland were now endowed with a native Legislature they would promptly settle this railway question and the other questions that had so long hampered, distracted, and impoverished their country. This question of Irish railway transit and rates had frequently been before this House. In 1844, Mr. Gladstone suggested to a Commission that—

> "At any time after twenty-one years the railways could be acquired at twenty-five years purchase of the average dividends of the three preceding years."

In 1868, he found that seventy-two Irish Peers and ninety Irish Members of Parliament asked for—

> "A general board of management, with a view to reduce expenses;"

and

> "For a general and uniform tariff for goods and passengers."

They also proposed that any loss arising therefrom should be borne by Ireland alone. In 1874 the right hon. Member for West Bristol, then Chief Secretary for Ireland, on a Motion for the purchase of Irish railways, expressed, on behalf of the Government, willingness to give financial assistance to the companies in consideration of amalgamation. On the 30th April, 1901, the present Chief Secretary, on a Motion regarding Irish railway rates and charges, said—

> "There is another difficulty showing how closely social questions are interlocked in Ireland. That is the difficulty of obtaining a properly trained staff for any large Government department without appearing to ignore the claims of Irishmen. The question of Irish railways is interlocked with that of Irish education, and if you do not make progress with Irish education you cannot find the technically trained men for the administration of Irish railways."

Yet, only a few days ago, the same right hon. Gentleman, on the question of University education, banged the door of higher education in their face. Eight years ago the present Prime Minister, then Chief Secretary, used almost the same language; but neither would help the people of Ireland to that education so necessary, as they acknowledged. Who could wonder at their constant protest against this prolonged and cruel injustice. He begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said he wished to second the Motion proposed by his hon. friend in so admirable a speech, which showed the care and exactitude with which his hon. friend always discharged any public duty committed to him. He did not think any one interested in Ireland could look with satisfaction at the railway system of that country, or the way in which the lines were worked. In the first instance, in a poor country, it was necessary and desirable to have narrow gauge railways, but in Ireland the gauge was very much wider than in this country, necessitating larger cuttings, embankments, and tunnelling, and entailing a great deal of unnecessary expense. His hon. friend had shown conclusively that though Ireland was the poorest country in Europe, its railway rates were about the highest. They had heard a great deal about the dumping, due to preferential rates and tariffs, which took place in this country; but in Ireland, which traded more with the British Empire than with foreign countries, the rates which prevailed were a great inducement to dumping. So great was the difference between local rates and through rates that he was informed that it was more economical for manufacturers who wished to send their goods to some place in Ireland to send them first over to England, and then back to Ireland in place of sending them direct. The late Mr. McCann, whose loss they all deplored, said that unless the railway rates in Ireland were reduced 50 per cent. there was little or no hope for Ireland. He maintained that if this reduction took place, although at first there would be a certain loss to the shareholders, in the long run it would be economical, double if not treble the traffic would be secured, and there would consequently be the greatest good to the country. Some of the directors were Irishmen, and some were not, but at any rate they were men who were selected as a rule from the loyal minority in Ireland, and they were people unsympathetic towards Irishmen and Irish interests in general, and certainly not 2 per cent. of them would obtain any public position in the gift of the people. But these men managed the railways of the country with little or no regard to the interest of the country. It was absolutely necessary if there was to be any good done in this matter in Ireland that the control of the railways should be placed under some central body. His hon. friend had shown the enormous advantage which the German people derived from the system prevailing in that country. The figures submitted showed that it was a system which was not only for the industrial advantage of the country, but that the Government were enabled to make an enormous sum by which to lighten the general taxation. He knew that some of his hon. friends thought that the remedy was to hand over the railways to State control, and in regard to that proposal he would say that whatever happened they could not be worked very much worse than they were at present.

He would give an instance of the utter indifference of the directors in Ireland to the comfort of the people who travelled over their systems. Their carriages were particularly uncomfortable, and, only within the last few years, any servant on the Great Southern and Western Railway who ventured to put a foot-warmer into a third class carriage was liable to dismissal. They could hardly imagine such a thing possible, but he could vouch for the accuracy of the statement because he had personal experience himself of that matter. Although the system was bad at present, he would for his part hesitate long before he would put the control of the Irish railways into the hands of an essentially Government department. A sort of compromise was suggested by his hon. friend, namely, a Board nominated partly from the existing directors and partly by the local traders. So far as Government Boards were concerned Irish Members knew from experience that they were packed by men of anti-Irish feeling who did not command the confidence of the people, and for his own part he thought it would be a mistake to increase the number of these Boards, which would do little or no good to Ireland. His hon. friend the Member for Roscommon introduced this matter in 1901, and on that occasion he reminded the Chief Secretary that a deputation of a most influential character waited on him some months before and asked him whether something could not be done to remedy the state of things. The deputation suggested that a Viceregal Commission should be appointed to inquire. When that point was raised in the House of Commons the right hon. Gentleman said that a new department had been formed, and that, as some powers had been conferred on it, it would only be reasonable to give them an opportunity of using those powers, and seeing what could be done in the matter. That was three years since, and although he did not wish to describe this as chicanery, he would say that he believed that the Treasury was largely at the bottom of the standstill in this matter, and that the department of which Sir Horace Plunkett was vice-chairman really had no power to take action in the matter. He hoped that, in his reply, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give some assurance that he was alive to the grave interests involved in this question. They heard very much of the resuscitation of Irish industries, and so forth, but he did not think they could have a proper resuscitation of them until this question was grappled with, and until traders and manufacturers in Ireland had an opportunity of competing, at any rate, on an even footing with other manufacturers. At present they were handicapped in the way he had described. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, excessive railway rates and defective transit facilities generally constitute a serious bar to the material advancement of Ireland, and should receive immediate attention from the Government."—(*Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien.*)

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said his hon. friend had referred to the statement of the Chief Secretary in 1901 that the newly-formed department should be given facilities for dealing with this and cognate questions. That raised a very important question, because that department, so far at any rate as this question was concerned, and as regarded Irish industrial life, seemed to have retrograded rather than progressed. He found that the Reports of 1902 and 1903 were more full and explicit, and showed a greater desire to deal with the question of railways in Ireland, than the Report presented yesterday. That was rather a regrettable fact. He might be allowed to express regret that the right hon. Gentleman who was vice-chairman of the board was not here to explain the inaction of the department. He was not going to censure the Agricultural Department in this matter at undue length. He believed that in regard to technical instruction they had done useful work, which had been largely supplemented by the work done by the county councils and various local bodies throughout Ireland. But with regard to the all-important question of transit and railway rates he did complain, not in a spirit of bitterness, but of disappointment, that a department which ought to have been the champion and custodian of these particular interests, had really largely neglected the work which was one of the most important features of the work committed to its care. The department might have done much more in two or three respects, and first of all by taking up the complaints of traders and manufacturers with regard to the deficiency of transit. It would be obvious to every business man in the House that an ordinary Member of this House or a trader or manufacturer suffered under this disadvantage. Grievances with respect to unfair charges and want of proper facilities were brought forward, but no Member of the House, and no body of Members, had the facilities for getting hold of information that a public department gave. He thought the Board of Agriculture and Technical Education might have continued their labours of 1901, and gathered from agricultural societies, chambers of commerce and shipping, any amount of information, without which it was difficult for any private Member of the House to establish a case. They all knew the general grievances, but when they complained they were confronted with the answer by the President of the Board of Trade that they should bring forward explicit cases. When such cases had been brought forward they had never found the President of the Board of Trade very sympathetic with Ireland in regard to these matters. The Board of Agriculture had neglected their duty in this matter. They should have supplied information to the Board of Trade. They could have helped in the bringing forward of specific instances with regard to the inequality of rates. It was almost impossible for a private Member to get the figures to enable him to make comparisons between the rates charged in Ireland and those in England and Scotland, and also between the charges made by shipping companies whose vessels plied between this country and foreign parts and those plying to Ireland. He marvelled at the industry of his friend the Member for Cork, who had brought forward such a mass of information. He said advisedly, and without any desire to censure the Board of Agriculture unfairly, that the return just issued by that department was absolutely valueless for the purpose of this debate. He found from a previous return that in 1890 the average rate per ton for merchandise in Ireland was as much as 27·14 per cent. in excess of the rate charged for the same traffic in

England, and further the average rate per ton for merchandise in 1900 was higher by nearly 2 per cent. than in 1890. They were therefore confronted with this fact, that while the average rates for merchandise in England had been decreasing, they had been increasing very considerably in Ireland. That was an alarming state of things which deserved the consideration of the Government. In the last reliable Return which was available, it was shown that the average rate for merchandise in Ireland was 37·14 per cent. in excess of the English and 34 per cent. in excess of the Scotch average. These were very disquieting figures. They asked for something more from the Chief Secretary than an academic or a mere finely phrased expression of sympathy. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to point to something in the way of practical work. Unfortunately, in regard to this important question they seemed to be retrograding. They wanted a simpler and more centralised system of management, and he hoped they would have a definite pledge from the Chief Secretary that he would take this matter into his serious consideration at the earliest possible moment.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said the subject which the hon. Member for Cork City had brought under consideration was not only of particular interest to Ireland but also of very general interest. Questions of transit were beginning to loom very large, and they were likely to loom larger in the future. The hon. Member for Cork City, who moved this Resolution, made an interesting speech and cited a number of statistics, but he would hardly expect him to deal *seriatim* with all his figures. Certain criticisms, however, of a general character occurred to him. There were certain points which he thought the hon. Member did not take sufficiently into account, such as the difference between through rates by land and sea, and rates for short distances. Then, too, he would remind the hon. Gentleman that in most countries abroad the railways were owned by the Government, and were run almost at cost price. The hon. Member for East Waterford, who seconded the Resolution, referred to a speech which he had made three years ago in the House, and in which he said the question of improving the transit facilities of Ireland was one which depended upon a settlement of the land question and the education question. He had done all he could to lay the foundation of that settlement. Without doubt, men in Ireland of humble origin had not the opportunities in regard to education as men in England, or as men in Scotland. The hon. Member opposite had asked for some assurances that the Government were alive to the great interests at stake. The hon. Member for Cork had also referred to the Report of the department for 1902–3, which he had described as meagre, and he alluded to the difference between the rates obtaining on the railways in Ireland and in other countries. But the hon. Member opposite was dealing with figures for general merchandise, which included iron ore and material of that kind, which was carried long distances, and there was very little indeed of that from Ireland; therefore that comparison was somewhat fallacious. Of course, that did not make it any more agreeable to Irishmen, when they were presented with the difficulty of getting satisfactory rates for the agricultural produce of small farmers upon a railway system for comparatively small consignments. In spite of the critical and pessimistic tone of the speeches to which they had just listened, he regarded the Resolution as rather an incentive to the Government to proceed with greater energy on the lines that were already being followed than a censure on the Government for not adopting other lines of a totally different character. Even if that were not so, he would make bold to answer that they were doing what they could.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): It is the same story from all English Governments.

*MR. WYNDHAM, continuing, said that in the Resolution there was very little to which exception could be taken. It was alleged, and truly, that transit facilities in Ireland were defective. The epithet "excessive" applied to the charges was ambiguous. From the point of view of the producer they were excessive, but from the point of view of the railway shareholder it would be difficult, almost impossible, to reduce these charges unless they were in a position to enforce drastic remedies. Were they in such a position? Take the proposal that railways in Ireland should be nationalised in some form or other. Without entering into the political or economic merits or demerits of such a plan, it might very well be held that Parliament would have been well advised to accept the proposition of th Royal Commission fifty years ago, that in the conditions of Ireland, so different from those of England, railways could be promoted with better results by the State than by private enterprise. That advice, however, was not taken, although not altogether repudiated, because construction had been assisted, and in the course of the last ten years there had been free grants for assistance of transit in Ireland amounting to £1,349,000. So something had been done by the State. But the recommendation of the Royal Commission was outside the sphere of practical politics now. After the advance of £100,000,000 for the purchase of Irish land he would be giving encouragement to false hopes if he were to say any word that would lead hon. Members to believe that he saw his way in the near future to an advance of £49,000,000 or £50,000,000 for the purchase of Irish railways. In the same way he would, in existing circumstances, put on one side the idea that the State could enforce amalgamation of railways in Ireland and lay down a conventional rate at a lower figure than those which now obtained and recoup those who had invested in these companies by a practical guarantee. That also was outside the sphere of practical politics. If that could not be done, for finance was a hard taskmaster, as they all knew—if heroic measures were out of the question—they should refrain from taking any action or using any language which might seem to threaten measures which they were not in a position to take up. The capital of the Irish railways was much less than that of English railways. Their receipts per mile were about one-fourth of the receipts of the English railways, and they were not in a condition to show very great enterprise unless they received encouragement rather than discouragement from that House. It was true that there were a number of lines in Ireland, but the point of fundamental importance was that they were very short lines. The Irish railways were not comparable to those in England, the total mileage of the Irish lines, including light railways and all railways built by the Government, was very little more than that of the Great Western Railway of England. Everybody would allow that this made it hard to run the railways cheaply and to give very low rates. There were difficulties also arising from the weight, size, and shape of consignments, and it was not possible to have an organisation for the collection of produce such as existed in England and, in a nearer approach to perfection, in America. Amalgamation had been tried by voluntary effort, and, though it had been attended with some local disappointments, on the whole it was a sound policy to pursue, and by it difficulties of haulage would be reduced.

Those being the difficulties, what action had the Government taken? He wished to consider this question from the points of view of rates, nature of consignments, and difficulties of collection. As far as the rates were concerned Irish railways were controlled by the same public Acts as controlled railway rates in Great Britain, namely, the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts of 1888 and 1894 and the Railway Rates and Charges Act of 1892. The new department of agriculture and technical instruction had taken action under those Acts repeatedly, and although they did not always succeed it must not be supposed that nothing was done. Representations were made and suggestions were offered which had sometimes been adopted, and the new department had special powers such as were not enjoyed by a department in England; it had power to prosecute inquiries and to act as complainant before the Railway Commissioners, and to charge the expenses to the public account. Complaint had been made of the meagre character of the reports issued, but it would be understood that the hon. Member who made the complaint was alluding to what was a mere summary of action of the Department. It was true that only in one case in 1902 did the Department bring this matter to a trial but in that case they were successful. There were, however, a number of cases where their representations had resulted in a reduction of the rates. It was very dull to read statistics, but with the permission of the House he would quote some cases in which reductions were obtained as the result of friendly correspondence with the companies concerned. For example, the Great Southern and Western Railway reduced butter rates from county Kilkenny to Belfast from 40s. to 35s. per ton and from Newcastle West to Liverpool from 32s. 6d. to 30s. a ton. The Midland Company reduced their rates on maize between Dublin and Castlerea from 11s. 6d. to 9s. 4d. per ton, and like reductions were made from other stations on their system. The Great Northern Company reduced their rates for apples and pears from Annaghmore to Londonderry from 15s. to 13s. 4d. per ton, for strawberries to Belfast from 12s. 6d. to 11s. 4d. per ton, and to Dublin from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 3d. per cwt. Fruit growing in the North of Ireland was a very important industry, and it was above all things necessary that such industries should get a fair chance, and it was in cases like this that the new Department could intervene with advantage. He admitted that Irish railways were somewhat timid in regard to initiative, but this new Department brought facts before the railway companies which were not previously within their knowledge, and when they had been able to convince the companies that certain kinds of produce could be put upon the market at a profit then the rates were reduced. It was difficult to make an impression by reading out long lists of statistics, but the figures he had before him did not deal simply with dairy produce and fruit alone. He had some figures with regard to live-stock which were of great importance. The Great Southern Company reduced their rates for the conveyance of horses from Patrickswell to Dublin from 84s. 4d. for four horses to 78s. 3d. Several lists of rates for the carriage of Irish and Continental produce were in the hands of the departmental transit inspectors but they had not yet been classified.

He wanted to come to the question of the collection of agricultural produce, and he must take note of the criticism which had been passed on Irish railways for giving undue preference to the foreign producer. That was a matter of such importance that if the House would bear with him he would quote some figures upon this point. He would give two instances dealing with butter. These rates were, from Limerick to Manchester, 37s. 6d. per ton; from Copenhagen to Manchester, 47s.; from Gothenburg to Manchester, 47s.; from Montreal to Manchester, 45s. 6d. per Ship Canal; from Enniskillen to Manchester, 45s.; from Hamburg to Manchester, 46s. 8d.; from Rotterdam to Manchester, 40s.; from Sligo to Manchester by steamer 35s. 10d., by Irish rail 40s. a ton. The rates on butter to Birmingham are from Cloughjordan, Tipperary, 48s. 4d. a ton; from Kenmare; 36s. 8d. via Cork, 40s.; via Dublin from Sligo, 43s. 4d.; by steamer and by Irish rail, 48s. 4d; from Hamburg, 42s. 6d.; Rotterdam, 39s. 11d.; Esbjerg, Denmark, 38s. 6d. The rates to Glasgow from Kenmare are 35s. 10d.; Cork route, 40s. 10d.; Dublin route from Buttevant, 30s.; via Cork, 34s. 2d.; via Dublin from Enniskillen, 28s. 4d.; from Clones, 30s.; from Hamburg, 50s.; from Rotterdam, 49s.; Esbjerg, Denmark, 45s. Besides these amounts, additional sums varying from 1s. 6d. to 7s. per ton had to be paid for the carriage of the butter by rail from the interior of Denmark to the port of shipment. Of course in Denmark the railways were owned by the Government, and the goods were carried almost at cost price. In regard to eggs, he would take the transit of eggs from a number of Irish centres, and make a comparison. The foreign rates are from the port of shipment, and therefore the comparison was more favourable. From Limerick to Manchester the rates were 43s. 4d. per ton; from Listowel to Manchester, 50s. per ton; Sligo, 40s., Kenmare, 45s. 10d., Hamburg, 48s. 4d., Rotterdam, 41s. 4d., and Copenhagen, 48s. 6d. From Ballyhaunis to London, the rates were 65s.; from Kenmare to London, 50s. 10d.; from Sligo, 56s. 8d.; and from Copenhagen, 50s. Would anybody say from those figures that there was preferential treatment in favour of foreign countries when these rates did not include a single penny for the cost of transit upon Continental railways. He would be happy to supply hon. Members with further figures, and agreed that it would be well, perhaps, to bring out a paper giving a long schedule of these important rates. Through rates were of advantage to the places which obtained them, and although other places might feel that they did not share in the advantages, it was to the general advantage of Ireland that there should be such through rates. He trusted that they would increase in Ireland and England, and increase not only as between Ireland and England, but between the United Kingdom and our colonies, especially Canada. He was not going into the tariff question, but he was suggesting that they could not look upon the economic problem in Ireland, in a wayside district deprived of the advantage of through rates, isolated from the question that free land was given by the Canadian Government to the farmers, that their produce was carried by Government railways or by private railways with a Government guarantee against loss. The subject was so intricate that it might lead him into the vista of speculation, from which he intended to refrain.

When hon. Members complained that through rates had not given as great advantages to country districts as they had to towns along the main line, he asked them to take the larger questions into consideration and remember that, on the whole, in view of the short haulage of the Irish railways, it was to the advantage of Ireland that there should be through traffic arrangements, and in his opinion it would be to the advantage of the United Kingdom if such through arrangements could be carried even further. Another sphere of activity of the Department was an important one. Instruction was given by the Department to Irish farmers not only in the cultivation of produce but in the best methods of presenting their goods in an acceptable shape for the market. This instruction had been of enormous value, because it enabled the farmers to know the form, size, and the weight of parcels which could be carried at cheap rates. The Department had taken up many complaints, and it was found that in many instances the cause of the high charge for articles which were put on the railway was due to the fact that they were in weights of less than 3 cwt. or sent by passenger trains when goods trains might have served. There was great need for an organised effort in the direction of teaching the producer how to put up his produce as a collecting consignment and more attractive for handling by the railway companies. Since there was no practical chance of adopting heroic measures, the Department did their best to push along all those three roads—keeping a jealous eye on the Irish railways; investigating the markets of Great Britain and the Continent; and teaching the Irish farmer to cultivate better. The farmer was grateful for the instruction given to him in the way of consignment in size and weight, and by seeing what could be done to collect such consigments and place them on the rail-head in a convenient form.

That led him to ask the House to consider the efforts made by two distinguished Irishmen, Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie, to assist in this third feature in the problem, namely, the proper methods for collecting produce and placing them upon the Irish railways. He would deal with this question as briefly as he could. The problem connected with the proper methods of collecting produce and placing it on the Irish railways had been harder than might at first sight be supposed to be the case. The idea of Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie was not to spread over the face of Ireland an enormous system of motor traction, but to find out the districts where the experiment of applying motor traction could be made and, if it succeeded, extend its application. Accordingly they mapped out Ireland into three sections, and selected men from amongst the pick of their staffs to investigate them. He felt it his duty to place at their disposal the staffs of all the Irish Departments, where they were needed, and, in addition, everywhere the Commissioners went they were met by the county councils. Altogether seventeen experimental districts, covering 363 miles, were surveyed and investigated. He would not go into all the details of the very interesting general Report which was drawn up by the Commission, which gave a detailed report upon each one of the seventeen routes, and which Lord Iveagh was good enough to submit to him for his observation, but certain questions arose which had to be dealt with. He would, if the House would allow him, deal with one or two of those problems. In the first place the Commissioners said that during the course of this inquiry they had been compelled to leave unvisited many districts which seemed to them worthy of attention. The hon. Member for East Clare must not be disappointed if the districts reported upon did not include some of the places in his constituency.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I am used to disappointments.

*MR. WYNDHAM said the Commission proceeded upon purely business lines and they were very anxious that their first effort should be crowned with success. Everywhere not only the county councils, but the local priests, clergymen, and doctors were in favour of the scheme; but some of the difficulties to be surmounted lay in the habits of the people. One was the idle and desultory practice of cartage, by which a farmer having his own horse and cart was content to occupy two days over 15 or 20 miles. These men thought only of the fact that they spent no money in the transaction, taking no account whatever of the loss of the two days; and, when it was suggested that payment should be made for an organised service, they were inclined to say, "I can take my own cart, in my own time, in my own way." But the people were being brought to see that that was not a sound economical method. The cardinal difficulties, however, in the application of a system of motor traction in Ireland were two—first, the speed limit and the weight of the motor and trailer; and secondly, the condition of the roads. As President of the Local Government Board he had endeavoured to meet Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie to the utmost length; and he was prepared to increase the speed limit to 10 miles—which they had asked for—and to increase the weight of the motor to 4 tons, and the trailer to 1½ tons; but that must be subject to the approval of the county councils. Some of the county councils, while showing the greatest willingness to meet the promoters of the enterprise in every way, were disposed to object to the weight of the motor and trailer. All the counties of Ireland, except five—Antrim, Kerry, Donegal, Meath, and Kildare—had accepted the three-ton engine, the 18 cwt. trailer, and a speed of 10 miles an hour, subject to the condition that the wheels did not track in the same line, and were of a minimum breadth of 4½ in. Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie assented to this, and as a matter of fact the width of the wheels would be greater. It had been suggested that in order to meet the question of roads there should be a certificate of the county surveyer, *viséd* by the Local Government Board, to the effect that the road was fit to bear such a weight travelling at such a speed. He did not believe there would be any difficulty about that at all; the Commissioners had travelled round the country with the county surveyors, and there was no intention of doing anything in the matter except in close co-operation with the county councils of Ireland. If there were any reconstruction it would be limited to comparatively short lengths of road. The roads of Ireland were as a whole good roads and the population was sparse, and in many districts the rate of speed would not be a low one. There were portions of the roads which ought to be strengthened if such weights were put on them, and for the reconstruction of such portions of the roads the Local Government Board would be prepared to lend money on very easy terms. He felt that he ought not to develop this at greater length, but he wished to say that all that had come before the promoters of this scheme encouraged them to proceed with it, and they felt that apart from the carriage of produce, which had been more immediately considered, that there was a prospect of carrying live-stock, and at a later date passengers. But, in the first instance, the problem was to carry agricultural produce which had to be collected on reasonable terms.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if the Chief Secretary could give them a list of the seventeen routes, and whether he would leave the means of communication at present in existence in certain districts, as they were until the motor system was introduced.

*__Mr. WYNDHAM__ said he would give a list of the districts. He would not give the whole of the seventeen routes originally contemplated because some of them had been rejected, but he would give a list showing where they were now. One effect of this scheme had been that the railway companies already had begun to take up the idea themselves, and certain routes which they had been examining had been taken up by the railway companies. This was the case in respect of 32½ miles of the route in the North East of Ireland and the railway company were now working 35½ miles at Newtowards-Portaffery by motor traffic. There were 20 miles from Derry to Feeny and Park to be worked, and nine miles from Ballymena to Port-Glenone awaiting to be worked. From Newcastle to Kilkeel 13½ miles were now being worked. Now he came to the lines which were sanctioned subject of course to making the neceessary arrangements with the Local Government Board. One of the most important of these, in his opinion, was the route from Ballina to Belmullet. Then there was another from Ballinasloe to Mount Bellew, and another from Galway to Costelloe. One more route which would probably be arranged was 14 miles from Parsonstown to Portumna. Other possible routes included 18½ miles from Portumna to Loughrea, and 15 miles from Enniscorthy to Kilmuckridge. It was very difficult to convey to the House without a map an idea of these arrangements. In all 220 miles of route were either sanctioned or in course of being agreed upon. They were still in the experimental stage. Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie wished to take up districts where the need was great and where success would crown their efforts. But anyone who had attended to the difficulties involved in this problem would agree that really no time had been lost, and that it was better, in a matter of this kind, to proceed slowly and surely than to rush into a more extensive, perhaps more flashy, plan. He had detained the House at very great length and he did not propose to enter into further detail in regard to this scheme of motor traffic. He might point out, however, that transit facilities included something more than railways. They had to look to the canals as well as the harbours of Ireland, and he hoped that by improving the harbours, private enterprise would be stimulated to do something. The offer of one company to allow one of their largest steamers on the West Coast of Ireland to call at any harbour which was made fit to receive their ships was encouraging. He wished to conclude his observations by pointing out that all such efforts necessitated a good deal of negotiation. At this moment he was on the point of concluding negotiations with the great Midland Company in Ireland in respect of one of the harbours, but all this involved a vast amount of detailed examination of roads which hon. Members opposite would scarcely conceive. Again, he was in negotiation with the Great Southern and Western Railway for an arrangement by which the Tralee and Donegal Railway would be put into a proper condition. Those negotiations were not quite concluded, but in view of all the circumstances, he thought they ought rather to encourage than to threaten Irish railway companies at the present time. He thought they ought to continue to enforce the provisions of the Acts of 1888, 1892, and 1894 and make representations to the companies. They ought to secure a reduction of rates wherever possible, and resist any increases in every case, and prevent as far as possible any preference being given to foreign producers. In addition to such efforts they must continue to prosecute investigations as to the condition of the markets, whether in Great Britain or on the Continent, and they must continue to give instruction to the farmers not only as to the best methods of raising produce but as to the best methods of putting it on the market. His experience was that Irish railways were too timid, but he doubted the wisdom of holding vague threats over their heads. On financial grounds it was a difficult question to nationalise the railways of Ireland or give them a State guarantee. Their object should be to get the railway companies to pluck up courage and to take their part, side by side with private enterprise, in that development of Irish agriculture and Irish industry which, though of recent growth, was very real and full of much promise for the future.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that at one time it would have been a very easy thing to secure some sort of amalgamation amongst these struggling railways in Ireland which had done so much harm to the country. The right hon. Gentleman had not stated the case quite fairly, for he had said that they complained of preferential rates to foreign countries. He wished to point out that these were not the preferential freights to which Irishmen objected. What they complained of was the preferential rates given to foreign goods brought into Ireland, which could be produced in better quality in Ireland itself, but where there were no facilities at all for cheap transit. If the policy of amalgamation was pursued by the Government in a proper spirit there would be no trouble in solving the difficulties which had been presented to this House. Years ago, when the House of Commons considered how the Irish railways should be built, the Railway Commission recommended that they should be built by the State. In 1837 the British railway promoters thought the whole system of private enterprise was in danger, and so they blocked and destroyed all the efforts of the Royal Commission, and supported this foolish system, which had never met with any success of any kind. Thirty years afterwards there was a Commission which reported in favour of amalgamation, and twenty years later the Allport Commission made a similar Report. This House had proved itself incapable of solving any Irish problem on an Irish basis. It was no use the Chief Secretary for Ireland telling them about motor traffic, for it was time the House put this childish treatment of the Irish question upon one side. He quite shared the disappointment with which the right hon. Gentleman's remarks had been received. He had no objection to the efforts which the Board of Agriculture were making in Ireland, and he did not object to the new effort which was being made by Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie. They belonged to a noble band of Irishmen who were constantly striving to alleviate human suffering, in Ireland, which had been caused by the neglect of the House of Commons. With the greatest respect for those efforts he objected to the House of Commons perpetuating this infamous railway system, which was paralysing every Irish industry. The House ought either to deal with this question, or else let Irishmen deal with it for themselves. The Chief Secretary talked about preparing goods for the market instead of dealing with these admitted evils. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would accept the Motion which had been proposed, for that would at any rate be a step forward. The hon. Member opposite had made a strong speech in favour of the nationalisation of Irish railways and *The Times* newspaper, which was not much prejudiced in favour of Ireland, had also advocated the nationalisation of the Irish railways as an urgent and necessary reform. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would at least accept the Motion.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said that as far as railway reform was concerned the right hon. Gentleman's speech must be considered disappointing, although he had listened with very great pleasure to the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman had foreshadowed. He only wished to say that, once the suggested scheme was started, it would be impossible to stop with the routes suggested, for routes were also required in a great many other districts which were quite as deserving of better means of communication.

Question put:

The House divided:—Ayes, 87; Noes, 121. (Division List No. 13.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbt. Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher

Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morrell, George Herbert
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar,Sir T.R(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir JohnE
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn.Sir William Hart
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood, and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 24th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Surrey Commercial Dock Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Lewisham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCE HOLDERS.

Petition from Scarborough, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Llwynhendy; Wrexham; Stockport; Lincoln (two); Tovil; Keynsham; East Kent; Stanningley; Brynsiencyn; Cilfren; Maesteg; Esgairnant; Betchworth; South Norwood; Law; Croydon; Guildford; Newbridge; Leicester; Lampeter; Gartmore; Llanhilleth; Gaediffaith; Engedi and Rhiw; Foubridge; Newcastle; Leeds; Newcastle Emlyn; Monkwearmouth; Southall; and Accrington; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899.

Petition from Islington, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Penryn, and Tunbridge Wells; to lie upon the Table.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

Petition from Abergavenny, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

Copy presented, of Army Estimates of Effective and Non-Effective Services for the year ending 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 73.]

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES, 1904-5).

Copy presented, of the sum required for the year ending 31st March, 1905, to defray the expense of the Ordnance Factories [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 74.]

ARMY (MEMORANDUM ON ESTIMATES)

Copy presented, of Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates of 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Motherwell and Bellshill Railway (Abandonment) Order, and the objects thereof [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3122 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICAN MINES (MORTALITY).

Address for "Return of the numbers and rate of mortality from (*a*) accident, (*b*) other causes, among (1) the white miners, artisans, and labourers employed in the Rand Mines; (2) all classes of natives in the Rand Mines; (3) the British Central African natives in the Rand Mines; (4) the natives in the Rhodesian Mines; and (5) the natives in the De Beers' Mines, Kimberley, during the last twelve months for which statistics are obtainable."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

POOR LAW SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

"To provide for Superannuation Allowances to certain local officers and servants in Ireland, for contributions towards such allowances by such officers and servants, and to make other relative provisions," presented by Mr. O'Malley; supported by Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Condon, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Clancy, Mr. McGovern, and Mr. Lundon; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 95.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Upkeep of London and Dublin Stationery Offices.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the average annual amounts expended during the last ten years on the principal items in connection with the upkeep (as distinct from the amounts expended on books, stationery, and other requisites for the various departments) of the London Stationery Office and the Dublin Stationery Office respectively during those years.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The average annual amounts expended from the Vote for Stationery and Printing during the ten years last completed in connection with the upkeep of the London Stationery Office and the Dublin Stationery Office have been respectively £34,220 and £3,058, making a total of £37,278. These figures include the amounts paid for salaries and wages for horses, carts, and incidental expenses, for police, and for printing, paper, etc. I am not in a position to state exactly the amounts spent from other Votes in connection with the upkeep of the two offices; but the following are the estimated amounts taken from Returns printed with the Stationery Office Estimate. The estimated average annual expenses during the ten years for rent, furniture, fuel, and light have been in London £2,957, in Dublin £504. The figures for other items, *e.g.*, rates, telegrams, postage, etc., cannot be stated separately.

Income and Expenditure of Patent Office.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the average annual amount for the past ten years of the Patent Office Vote and Patent Office extra receipts respectively received in Great Britain and amount expended therein, and also state average annual amount of Patent Office extra receipts received from Ireland, and state average annual expenditure in Ireland during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The average annual amount of the Vote for the Patent Office for the past ten years was £63,110, and the average annual amount of the receipt from Patent Stamps was £205,242, of which £969 was from Ireland. The separate figures of expenditure for Ireland cannot be stated.

Average Amount of Admiralty Vote—Average Expenditure of same in Ireland.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the average annual amount of the Admiralty Vote for the past ten years, and give the annual average expenditure in connection with Haulbowline Dockyard and the coastguard service in Ireland during those years.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The accounts of the Admiralty are not kept in such a form as to enable the information asked for in the latter part of the hon. Member's Question to be given. Any statement on the subject is necessarily incomplete and is nothing more then an approximation. The details as to naval expenditure during the past ten years will be found in a statement attached to the Navy Estimates which will be circulated to-night.

Civil Service Pensions—Temporary Service.

Mr. THORNTON (Clapham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that temporary clerks who were certificated by the Civil Service Commissioners and entered the service between the end of the year 1870 and August, 1871, and were afterwards promoted to permanent posts in the service, are allowed to reckon only half of their continuous temporary service for pension, and that temporary registered writers who first came into the service between the same dates and were afterwards promoted to permanent posts are allowed to reckon all their continuous temporary service for pension, although the regulations with regard to pension under which each of the above classes entered the service were identical, he will, under these circumstances, take steps under Clause 3 of the Superannuation Act of 1887 to allow those who were formerly temporary clerks to reckon in like manner all their continuous service for pension.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The rule which has been in force for the last fifteen years is that copyists or writers placed on the permanent establishment are allowed to count one-half of their previous service for pension. It is true that, under a special concession made twenty years ago, writers employed before 19th August, 1871, and afterwards, without interruption of service, transferred to the establishment, are allowed to reckon their whole service for pension; but I see no sufficient ground for extending this concession to other cases than those which it was intended to meet.

Increase of Salary for Chief Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the increase in the work of chief clerks to surveyors of taxes, it is proposed to increase the present annual increment.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The wages of clerks in all grades in the offices of surveyors of taxes were thoroughly revised in 1900, when substantial improvements were made in their rates of pay, and no addition to their increments seems called for.

Amount of Corn Duty Repaid Last Year.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what was the total amount of the 1s. per quarter duty on corn repaid by the Treasury last year to those who held stocks of foreign corn in the United Kingdom; and what amount of the remitted tax, if any, was paid to the producer of the imported corn.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The total amount of duty repaid under Section 1, Sub-section 4, of the Finance Act, 1903, to those who held stocks of grain, &c., on which duty had been paid, is £362,342 12s. 7d. The repayments were confined by the terms of the Act to persons proving to the satisfaction of the Customs that they had in their stock or possession on the appointed date grain or articles on which the duty had been paid. This provision obviously could not include any stocks remaining in the possession of the foreign producer at the time.

English Whisky sold as Irish or Scotch.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that many brewers and blenders who own tied houses supply them with English spirit which they compel their tenants to sell as old Irish and Scotch whisky, he will in the interests of both commercial morality and the public health, cause instructions to be issued with a view to putting an end to these practices.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) There is no evidence before me to support the allegation made in the Question.

Absence of County Court Judges—Payment of Deputies.

MR. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of the fact that County Court Judges during temporary absence from illness or other cause are compelled to find, and pay out of their own pockets, the deputies who sit for them, whether he will introduce a Bill to relieve them from this burden.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Any legislation by the Government in relation to the County Courts will be in the hands of the Lord Chancellor, to whom I will communicate the hon. and learned Member's suggestions.

Effects of Maritime War on Shipping and Commercial Transactions.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the President of the

Board of Trade whether he has any official information showing that the conditions of maritime war have produced any material alterations in commercial and shipping transactions between the United Kingdom, British Colonies or Possessions abroad, with either Japan or Russia; and, if so, can he state generally their main features.

Sir JOHN COLOMB: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any branch of his Department is charged with the duty of observing and recording any important current changes in commercial and shipping operations of Russia and Japan under the varying conditions of maritime war; and, if so, whether current information so obtained, if of importance to British merchants and shippers, is communicated promptly to the trade and shipping centres of the Empire.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The time that has elapsed since the beginning of the war is too short to enable me to make any general statement as to its effect on British commercial and shipping transactions. In reply, however, to this and the following Question of the hon. Member I may assure him that the position is being carefully watched by the Commercial and Marine Departments of the Board of Trade, in consultation with other Government Offices, and that all information received which is of importance to British traders and which can properly be made public will be promptly communicated to those interested by publication or otherwise.

Value of British and Irish Exports to North American Colonies.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that since the denunciation by Lord Salisbury, in 1897, of the Treaties of 1862 and 1865 with the German Zollverein and Belgium, British goods have been admitted into Canada with a rebate of 25 per cent., which was increased in 1901 to 33⅓ per cent., he will state the total value of exports of British and Irish produce to North American Colonies in 1897, 1898, 1900, and in 1902 after the rebate had been raised to 33⅓ per cent., and in 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The 25 per cent. rebate given by the Dominion of Canada began on 1st August, 1898, and the 33⅓ per cent. rebate on 1st July, 1900. I give below the particulars required for each year since 1897, inclusive.

Years.	Value of Exports of British and Irish Produce from the United Kingdom.		
	Dominion of Canada.	Newfoundland.	Total to North American Colonies.
	£	£	£
1897	5,171,850	304,341	5,476,191
1898	5,838,000	316,773	6,154,773
1899	6,969,535	377,607	7,347,142
1900	7,605,257	521,453	8,126,710
1901	7,785,472	358,223	8,143,695
1902	10,345,256	375,069	10,720,325
1903	11,105,011	392,119	11,497,130

Education (Scotland) Bill—Date of Introduction.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Lord Advocate whether the Education (Scotland) Bill will be introduced before Easter.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) In the absence of my right hon. friend the Leader of the House I am unable to give any undertaking as to the course of business. The Bill, however, will be introduced on the first available opportunity.

Mayor of Londonderry—Residential Qualification.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the present occupant of the Londonderry Mayoralty has no residential habitation within the city of Londonderry as required by the Charter of Charles II.; and whether, in view of the fact that penalties attach to the holding of the office under such circumstances, he will say what steps, if any, the Government purpose taking in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I am not aware of the provision of the Charter to which the Question refers. The present mayor is a local government elector of the city of Londonderry, and even if the Charter mentioned contains a clause such as is suggested, there is strong ground for contending that it is impliedly repealed by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1840 and the Local Government Act of 1898, and the Orders adapted thereunder. In these circumstances it is not a case for Government interference. Any person aggrieved can take proceedings in the King's Bench Division to determine the question.

Purchase of O'Grady Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if any negotiations for the purchase of the O'Grady Estate, consisting of the townlands of Cam and Garrycam, have yet been entered into with the Estate Commissioners; and, if so, will he direct that no time be lost in giving effect to the sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No application has been made to the Commissioners in respect of the sale of this property.

Flooding of the River Riffey, County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in consequence of insufficient sinking, the River Riffey, which flows through the townlands of Clonwhelan and Cam, in county Longford, constantly floods these townlands in time of rain; whether he is aware that, on 11th September in last year, two men were drowned in consequence of the floods caused by this river; and will he direct the attention of the Board of Works to the immediate necessity of providing funds for the proper sinking and embanking of this river.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed that two men were drowned on the date mentioned in the flood on the public road near Clonwhelan. The townlands referred to are not comprised in a drainage district, and in the absence of a properly constituted drainage board the Board of Works have no power to advance money for the purposes of arterial drainage. I am making further inquiry, however, with a view to ascertain to what causes the floods complained of are due.

Marine Works at Cape Clear.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when the proposed works (under the Marine Act) at Cape Clear will be commenced; and whether, in view of the present condition of the harbour, he will have them expedited.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Tenders are about to be invited for these works. If a satisfactory tender be received and the weather be favourable they will be undertaken forthwith.

Sale of Irish Society's Estates.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the evidence submitted to the Select Committee of this House on Land Acts (Ireland) in Session 1894, and of the pending sale to the agricultural tenants, the Government will consider the advisability of reappointing the Committee in order to provide that the capital realised by the sale of the estates will be held in trust for the people of Londonderry and district, and not taken away to London as happened in the case of the sale by the Grocers and other London companies to their Irish tenantry.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The hon. Member has sent me a newspaper report, from which it appears that the Irish Society proposes to sell its estates under the Act of last year. The purchase money must be applied in the first place in repaying the large loans which have been made to the Society by the Board of Works and raised on debentures issued under Parliamentary authority for public improvements in Derry and Coleraine, and in discharging other charges on the Society's estates. Any surplus that may remain will be expended by the Society, as in the past, for the benefit of Londonderry and Coleraine, and adjoining districts.

Cost of Extra Police in Castlebar and Wexford.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a sum of £920 has been levied on the districts of Castlebar and Wexford for extra police; and whether, considering the condition of those districts and the difficulty experienced by the inhabitants in meeting their liabilities, he will see that this sum is refunded.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There is no power to refund any portion of the charge levied pursuant to statutory authority in respect of the cost of employment of extra forces of police.

Increased Barrack Accommodation at Bermuda.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER: To ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the fact that in Bermuda the permanent barracks are not sufficient to accommodate the troops there, and that both officers and men have to live in bell tents, whether he would provide them with more convenient and suitable tents; and whether, seeing that three-fifths of the married men on the strength at Bermuda have to leave their families behind, contrary to the terms of engagement, he will consider the advisability of removing this cause of dissatisfaction.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The point raised concerning the nature of the tents provided for the officers and men will be referred to the General Officer Commanding for his consideration. Practically the whole of the accommodation at the station is under reconstruction at the present time, and additional married quarters are being provided as fast as possible under the Military Works Loan. In the meantime the families who are separated from the troops are drawing separation allowance. It must be pointed out that the provision of quarters for families on the married strength does not form part of the terms of engagement.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

South African Military Railways.

*Mr. J. S. AINSWORTH (Argyll): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state on what terms the Imperial Military Railways of South Africa have been transferred to the civil Governments of the Transvaal and Orange River States; what claim these Governments have as against the expenditure of £900,000 by the British Government on those railways, and what the claim of £1,250,000 by the British Government against the civil Governments of these States represents; and why the Imperial Military Railways were transferred to the civil Goverments before these claims were investigated and settled.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR) Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): As the railways in the Orange Free State and Transvaal were conquered they were taken over and worked by the Army

At the termination of the war they were handed over to the civil Governments of those Colonies without payment. The claim of £1,250,000 (which includes the sum of £900,000 referred to) represents approximately the amount expended out of Army funds on the construction of new lines, and the provision of additional rolling stock which was admitted to be beneficial to the new Colonies on taking over the railways, and so recoverable from them. The Colonies have admitted the correctness of the above claim, but preferred a counter-claim for the deterioration to the lines and rolling stock, while in military use, on the ground that very large expenditure would have to be incurred from colonial revenues to make this good. This counter-claim would, though not expressed in figures, in the opinion of the civil Government, extinguish the War Office claim. His Majesty's Government have declined to admit this counter-claim on the ground that these railways, which were held and maintained by the Army, did not become an asset of the Colonies until handed over by the military authorities on the termination of hostilities. It was obviously necessary to hand over the lines at the termination of the war to the civil Administration, subject so the reservation of the claim in question.

*MR. J. S. AINSWORTH: Are we to understand that in addition to the £900,000 and £1,250,000 a further claim has been made by the local Governments against the Imperial Government?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There is a counter-claim by the civil Government.

*MR. J. S. AINSWORTH: For how much?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Practically the same amount as our claim against them. It is in respect of the deterioration of the line.

*MR. J. S. AINSWORTH asked how soon these claims would be settled.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he could not tell. The matter was out of the hands of the War Office.

South African Mines—Mortality Statistics.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W. R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will grant the Return relating to the rate of mortality in the South African mines standing on to-day's Paper.†

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I will endeavour to obtain such a Return as soon as possible.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Hours of Work.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any provision has been made in the regulations attached to the Chinese Labour Ordinance of the Transvaal for limiting the number of hours in each day, and the number of days in each week, during which indentured labourers may be required to work underground; and, if so, whether he will state that limit; also whether he has arranged that one day in seven shall be given them as a day of rest corresponding to our Sunday.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not in a position to make a definite statement at present as to the number. This is one of the matters which is being provided for in the regulations which are under consideration. I may, however, inform the hon. Member that in the mines ten hours shifts are the general rule. Practically no work is done in the mines from 5 a.m. on Sundays till 7 a.m. on Monday as the result of the Sunday Labour Law.

MR. BAYLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman put the existing law into force with regard to the Chinese who are imported.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The existing law will apply.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the regulations are under consideration. Are the House to understand that they have not yet been settled; and if that is the case, when will they be settled?

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† See page 834

*MR. LYTTELTON: They will not be settled completely for five or six years; but the substantial pledges which I have given to the House with regard to the regulations are now actually under consideration and will, I think, be settled in a very short time.

Transit Regulations for the Chinese Labourers.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the conveyance of labourers from China to Africa, under the Transvaal Labourers' Ordinance, is to be conducted in all cases subject to the provisions of the China Passenger Ships Act of 1855.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Chinese Passengers Act of 1855 and the Ordinance of Hong-Kong No. 1 of 1889 apply to every ship carrying from any port in Hong-Kong and every British ship carrying from any port in China. If in any case embarkation should take place from any ports of ships not within the ambit of those Acts (which is not contemplated) regulations not less protective to the emigrant will be framed.

MR. BUCHANAN: Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman gives a promise that the provisions of this Act will apply to labourers imported from China?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have answered the Question accurately. I think the hon. Member's Question did not quite recapitulate the effect of my answer. The Act applies to Hong-Kong as regards all ships, and it applies to every British ship carrying from any port in China. It would be practically impossible to get outside the ambit of that Act, but if by any chance that was done regulations would be framed to meet the case.

MR. BUCHANAN: The other night the right hon. Gentleman quoted this Act and laid stress upon his promise.

"Protector" of the Chinese.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say on what fund the salary of the Protector of Chinese will be charged.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The salary of the Protector of Chinese, who in the Ordinance is designated Superintendent of Labourers, will be paid from Transvaal Funds.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN: What opportunity will the House have of criticising the conduct of these officials?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order! That does not arise on this Question.

Macedonian Gendarmerie.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have yet received the proposals of the officers entrusted with the task of drawing up a scheme for the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in Macedonia; and, if so, will he state to the House the substance of their proposals.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The proposals for the reorganisation of the Macedonian gendarmerie are still under discussion at Constantinople and have not yet been finally settled. I hope shortly to be in a position to give the House further information on the subject.

The "Mandjur."

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether there is any foundation for the report that His Majesty's Consul-General at Shanghai associated himself with the demand that the Russian cruiser, "Mandjur," should leave that port.

EARL PERCY: No, Sir. His Majesty's Consul-General took no part whatever in the demand for the withdrawal of the "Mandjur."

Metropolitan Police Magistracy.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that inconvenience is experienced in the Metropolitan Police Courts owing to there being an insufficient number of stipendiary magistrates to cope with the work, and will he consider the expediency of adding to their number.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The matter is one which has been constantly under consideration; but I do not see my way at the present time to ask the Treasury to increase the charge on Imperial Funds for the Police Court service of the Metropolis. I think any inconvenience there may be arises from the difficulty of arranging the sittings of the magistrates rather than from the insufficiency of numbers.

Tuberculosis—Milk Vending Regulations.

*MR. CHAPMAN (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, pending the Report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, he will take steps to prevent the insertion in Private Bills, promoted by local authorities, of clauses affecting the sale of milk applicable only to particular districts.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The clauses referred to have been included in a number of Local Acts since the Royal Commission was appointed. Whether they be inserted in any particular Bill is a matter for the consideration of the Committee on that Bill, but I could not undertake to interfere in the manner desired by my hon. friend.

Gipsy Encampments—Model Bye-Laws.

LIEUT.-COLONEL TUFNELL (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a communication from the Rochford Rural District Council pointing out that, notwithstanding the adoption by local authorities of the model bye-laws of the Local Government Board with respect to tents, vans, sheds, and similar structures, and the fact that prosecutions and fines have followed their adoption, the nuisance caused by gipsies tends to increase; and, if so, whether the Local Government Board will revise the model bye-laws with a view to their being made more stringent in the interests of public health.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have seen the communication referred to. The model series of bye-laws issued by my Department are intended as a general guide to local authorities in preparing bye-laws for their districts, and I am not aware that local authorities have usually found the particular series in question to be insufficient. It is, however, competent for the Rochford Rural District Council, subject to the provisions of the enactment relating to the matter, to make bye-laws in addition to those included in the model series. If they submit any such bye-laws to me I shall be happy to give consideration to them.

Irish Coastguards and Illegal Trawling.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state if coastguards in Ireland are required to take any, and, if so, what steps to prevent fishing boats from illegally trawling in their districts; and whether any change has been made in the coastguard regulations in this respect.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham): It is not the duty of the coastguard to take any active steps to prevent fishing boats from illegally trawling in their districts, but they are ordered to telegraph direct to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Dublin, intelligence of any cases of illegal trawling which may come under their observation. No change has been made in the coastguard regulations in this respect.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is it not the fact that the trawling plant when seized is resold at a nominal figure? Will the hon. Gentleman take steps to secure its destruction in future cases ?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE: I have no information as to that.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I can assure the hon. Gentleman it is the case.

Irish Military Canteens—Sale to Civilians.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the managers of military canteens supply civilians, particularly in county towns in Ireland, with goods; and, if so, will he state whether this is in accordance with military rules; and whether, with a view of preventing interference with the interests of local traders, he will take steps to secure the discontinuance of this practice.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The King's Regulations in paragraph 1015, which deals with purchases at canteens, lays down that "No Civilians are to be allowed to purchase articles in any of the establishments at any time." There is no reason to believe that this regulation is infringed and I shall be glad if the hon. Member will furnish me with any particulars giving grounds for the statement contained in the Question.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to stop this practice ?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: If the hon. Member can give me any evidence of irregularity I will do my best to stop it.

Pettigo Petty Sessional Bench.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that of the seven magistrates who constitute the petty sessions bench of Pettigo one only is a Roman Catholic; and whether, having regard to the fact that a majority of the population of the district consists of members of the Roman Catholic Faith, will any, and, if so, what steps be taken to secure to that majority greater representation on the magisterial bench.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The fact is, I believe, as stated in the first part of the Question. Recommendations for the appointment of gentlemen to the Commission of the Peace are made to the Lord Chancellor or the Lieutenant of the county. Any such recommendations, if made, will be duly considered.

*Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): What are the necessary qualifications for a magistrate ?

[No answer was returned.].

Irish Department of Agriculture.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return standing on to-day's Paper dealing with the Department of Agriculture, Dublin.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member for West Cavan has already been granted a Return containing all the information indicated, with the exception of that suggested in the last column of the further Return proposed. There is no record of the nationality of officials.

The following is the Return referred to:—

Department of Agriculture (Dublin). Return dealing with officers in the Department of Agriculture, Dublin, in the following form:—

Names of various officers.	Salary.	Date of appointment.	Previous position.	Examination passed.	Other qualifications.	Age.	Nationality: English, Scotch, or Irish.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say it is impossible to state the nationality of these officials? Is that not absurd?

MR. WYNDHAM: It would not be impossible to obtain the information. But all the rest of the information asked for is already embodied in Returns which have been given, and I did not think it of sufficient importance to get another Return for that one purpose.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: But will you get it now?

MR. WYNDHAM: I will consider the point.

Irish Evicted Tenants.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the difficulty of landlords and evicted tenants agreeing upon the future rent of the holdings from which the tenants were evicted, and the consequent delay in the reinstatement of such tenants, and further, having regard to the fact that in many cases the evicted tenants cannot be provided for until a sale of the estate on which the evicted lands are situate takes place, he will introduce a clause in the amending Land Bill providing for their more speedy reinstatement and settlement.

MR. WYNDHAM: Such difficulties, in so far as they exist, have been surmounted on the Coolgreany Estate, and I have no reason to believe that they will prove intractable elsewhere. I am not prepared to depart from the provisions embodied in the Act of last year by consent, after full debate.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman make an effort to bring about the reinstatement in county Kerry of evicted tenants on estates which are not at present for sale, and where the holdings are still vacant?

[No answer was returned].

Irish Butter.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state on what date the Department of Agriculture for Ireland expect to be able to publish the statistics of the shipments of butter from Ireland to this country, and will he explain why the Department have failed to do this.

MR. WYNDHAM: Some of the local bodies concerned are not yet in a position to furnish complete returns. When these have been received the Department will lose no time in publishing the statistics referred to.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): In view of the probable early introduction of the Butter Bill can we have the Return at once? It is important.

MR. WYNDHAM: I will represent that to the Department.

MR. FLAVIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman get statistics as to the importation into Ireland of foreign butter. We believe there is some mixing locally.

[No answer was returned].

Irish Police and Freemasonry.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the late Sergeant Straghan, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, Belfast, passed through all the offices of the Donegore True Blue Masonic Lodge, No. 92, including that of worshipful master, was in high rank as a Companion of Royal Arch Chapter, 97, and was one of the founders and first secretary of Symon's Masonic Lodge, No. 278; whether he can state if any of his superior officers who recommended the late sergeant for promotion were members of any of these Lodges, or whether any constables who served under him were members; and whether, in view of the fact that membership of this society may be subversive of discipline in the Force and is repugnant to the majority of the Irish people, he will issue instructions to the Royal Irish Constabulary on the subject.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has forwarded to me a newspaper report of the death of this member of the Force. The report eulogises the late sergeant, who is stated to have enjoyed the highest reputation as a peace officer for the honourable and independent discharge of his duties. The suggestion that he secured special privileges because he was a Mason is without foundation. Members of the Constabulary are allowed to attend Masonic meetings provided their absence does not interfere with the performance of their public duties. It is not proposed to issue instructions such as are suggested in the Question.

Head Constable Moore, R.I.C.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state where Head Constable Moore, whom he stated last session to have been transferred to Greencastle, county Antrim, on temporary duty, is now stationed, and whether he is in receipt of extra remuneration for temporary duty.

MR. WYNDHAM: This head constable is still at Greencastle. He is not in receipt of extra remuneration.

MR. MACVEAGH: When will he be removed?

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not interfere in such minor matters.

Police Constable Walsh of Rostrevor.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Police Constable Walsh, of Rostrevor, county Down, has been censured for attending in uniform an open air sectarian meeting in that town; whether he is aware that, on a previous occasion, this constable distributed copies of a sectarian newspaper to workmen employed in the town; that he made a collection of money in Rostrevor in 1900 at the instance of the Church Mission Society; that complaints have been made as to his molesting a lady visitor to the town; and, if so, will he say whether this lady has been afforded an opportunity of identifying Walsh; and whether, in view of complaints against him for provoking religious controversies, it is proposed to retain this policeman in a Roman Catholic district.

MR. WYNDHAM: The constable attended, in uniform, an out-door religious meeting; he was not censured for having done so. He gave away a few copies of the *British Workman* newspaper about three years ago. He made a collection in 1900 for the Indian Famine Fund and holds a receipt for the sum collected. He made no other collection. Complaint was made that a policeman spoke on religious matters to a lady visitor; it was not alleged that Walsh was the constable. He holds a high record for good police service, and his superior officers have no reason to believe that he will not continue to perform his duties without offence to any section of the inhabitants. It is not intended to transfer him to another district.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is it not the fact that this man has been twice censured by the Inspector-General for interference in religious questions. Will he be continued in a Catholic district?

MR. WYNDHAM: My information does not bear that out.

MR. MACVEAGH: I have a letter to that effect from the Inspector-General.

Irish Local Taxation—Weekly Tenements.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he received from the Macroom Urban Council a resolution, passed on the 11th December, 1903, to the effect that the members considered the clause or section in the Local Government Act of 1898 defective, which makes the occupants of weekly tenements liable for rates and which relieves the owners who were hitherto liable; and, if so, will he consider the advisability of such an amendment of the existing Act as would secure that, as formerly, the owners of property of a valuation of £4 and under should be made liable for the rates.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Act of 1898 was based on the principle that the occupier should be rated, and the Agricultural Grant was fixed upon this understanding. The fundamental change suggested is neither practicable nor desirable.

MR. SHEEHAN: Is it not the fact that in consequence of this provision in the Irish Local Government Act, tenants of these tenements have to pay more rates than formerly?

MR. WYNDHAM: I must ask for notice.

MR. SHEEHAN: Have you not received many representations from public bodies in Ireland on this point?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have answered the Question on the Paper. I do not propose to suggest any amendment of the law.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

CLASS I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,300, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces."

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) moved the reduction of the Vote by £100, on the ground that the amount asked for ought to be included in the Army and Navy Votes, and that a promise had been given on the previous occasion that no further money under this head should be placed on the Civil Service Estimates. He said he ought perhaps to have moved the Adjournment so that the Vote might be put in its proper place, but under the circumstances it was perhaps sufficient—in order to maintain the right of the House in this matter—to propose a small reduction.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,200, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) thought the explanation he had to give would satisfy the hon. Member. Last year several Members complained of the manner in which this item was treated in the Estimates, Osborne House being used as a convalescent home for naval and military officers. It had accordingly been arranged that in the forthcoming Estimates Osborne House should appear still in Class I, but as a separate Vote. It was, however, necessary that the Supplementary Estimate of this year should be framed in correspondence with the original Estimate.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) did not think that the explanation of the noble Lord met the case, as it was still proposed to keep in the Civil Service Estimates a Vote which was essentially an Army and Navy Vote. That was not giving effect to the undertaking entered into last year. He should therefore give his support to the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) thought the hon. Member for King's Lynn was a little bit unreasonable. The explanation of the noble Lord was perfectly satisfactory, and had any other course been adopted the hon. Member would have been one of the first to complain had the Supplementary Vote been put under a distinct heading which had no correlative in the year's Estimates.

LORD BALCARRES reminded the Committee that the expenditure of this Vote was controlled by the Office of Works under a statute passed by the House two or three years ago. It was therefore impossible to include it in the Army and Navy Estimates.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will my noble friend submit that point to the Public Accounts Committee and abide by its decision?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) said he could not answer that question off-hand. The matter of Osborne House was governed by statute.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.), as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, could not recollect ever having had a question of that kind to consider. Their duty was to see that money was applied to the purposes for which it was voted by the House of Commons.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) also did not think it came within the province of the Committee to decide under what head a Vote should appear.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: It has been done before.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY said he could not remember any instance of that having been done. Could the hon. Member cite one?

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Yes, but is this in order?

***The CHAIRMAN**: The hon. Member started it himself?

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Then I can assure the hon. Member that before his time and mine the question as to what Estimate a Vote should appear under was referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY said his hon. friend evidently could not cite a concrete case. He seemed rather to be making a mountain out of a molehill. Osborne House was given by the King to the nation. It was a Royal palace, and to all intents and purposes continued as such. What object would be gained by shifting the Vote from its present place to the Army and Navy Estimates? It would only tend to deprive it of its historic character—it would be removing a small landmark for the mere sake of altering the accounts. The real duty of the Public Accounts Committee was to see that the nation got value for the money which was expended, and nothing in the shape of efficiency could possibly be gained by merely transferring the Vote from one Estimate to another.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) supported the view of the hon. Member for King's Lynn. Part of the functions of the Public Accounts Committee was to give recommendations to the House as to the way in which the Estimates should be brought forward.

***Sir ALBERT ROLLIT** (Islington, S.) said the argument that this was a Royal palace, which in fact it never was, overlooked the statute which fixed the *status* of Osborne House. It was obviously desirable that a Vote applicable to the Army and Navy should appear in its proper class, so that the total Vote for the Services might be known and correct, and although it was perhaps necessary that this Vote should appear, for this session only, where it now did, because it had its correlative in the original Estimate, he hoped the opinion of the Public Accounts Committee would be taken as to the position it should occupy in the future. But he rose in order to enter his protest against the great difference between the original and the revised Estimate. In this case the revised Estimate was practically double the original Estimate.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that as far as he could judge there was no necessity to discuss this matter further because the Government majority had arrived.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) said he would try to show that the spirit of vigilant criticism was not wanting on his side of the House. It had been very pertinently pointed out that this item was double the original Estimate. He thought the Leader of the Opposition might have condescended to take notice of this great difference between the original and the revised Estimate. Surely they might have some explanation as to this very extraordinary discrepancy. They would like to know more about this scheme for turning Osborne House into a convalescent home. He remembered that on one occasion the hon. Member for Mid Lanark kept the House for a whole hour before the holidays discussing this item, and it was surprising that a gentleman of his keen critical faculty should be absent. He should be glad to have some information as to the progress of the work there.

MR. WHITLEY asked if it was in order to discuss these matters on the Supplementary Estimate.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is going rather wide of the question, although he is entitled to ask why that sum is asked for and how it is to be expended.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: You have a majority of fifteen now.

MR. J. F. HOPE said he wished to have some details given as to what steps had been taken to secure proper sanitary arrangements. He should like some medical Member of the House to give his opinion upon this point. This was very necessary in the case of Osborne House, because the Isle of Wight had an extremely relaxing climate. He had some doubts as to whether his noble friend could fully satisfy him on these points, but perhaps he would say as much as he knew, and he would perhaps answer them more fully when the arrangements had been more advanced. They could not scrutinise these items too much, for if they got into the habit of allowing £7,300 to pass without adequate attention they might get into the habit of passing £730,000 or £7,300,000 in the same way.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the Government majority now stood at twenty.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said the Government ought to give them a sufficient explanation when these points arose. This item ought to be treated as an Army Vote. Osborne House had ceased to be a Royal Palace, for it was a gift by the Sovereign for the purposes of the Army, and it was entirely misleading to treat it as a Royal palace. It was a very unsatisfactory arrangement for the Treasury to put upon the Royal Palaces Vote an expense of this sort, which ought to be put in its proper place on the Army Votes. He wanted to have some explanation as to why the amount had been doubled. That was not a satisfactory way of dealing with the House of Commons. When voting money they wanted to know what they were about. No one could say that the House of Commons would grudge money for a matter of this sort, but how could there be adequate accounting and a proper check on expenditure if they were going to have a Vote doubled in this way. Generous as the House of Commons was they did not like to be asked in the first instance to vote a sum of money for a particular purpose and afterwards to vote twice the original sum when the bill came in.

LORD BALCARRES said the hon. Baronet the Member for South Islington had complained of this Vote being included in the Civil Service Estimates instead of being included in the Army Votes. It might be that, as presented now, the Vote was misleading, but it would be still more misleading if it were put under the Army Votes. It was impossible to allocate this Vote to any single Department which would cover the whole service. Not only did it deal with Army and Navy matters, but it must be remembered that the Vote dealt with certain charges in connection with Osborne House, which, according to His Gracious Majesty's desire, was now thrown open to the public irrespective of Army or Navy purposes. It dealt with the grounds of the estate to which the public would have access; and finally it dealt with certain Royal residences which clearly must come under the Office of Works, and which could not possibly be allocated to the War Office. The hon. Member had asked him as to the progress of the work, and also in regard to the expenditure. He thought he could explain that. Two years ago His Majesty handed over Osborne House with the object of its being devoted to the purpose of a convalescent home, and it was found necessary so to redistribute the rooms as to make them more suitable for receiving patients. That was done at considerable expense, which the House voted last year. After that a very strong committee was appointed to supervise the convalescent home. It included the chief medical officers of the Army and Navy and a number of eminent civilian doctors. These distinguished men visited the building, and came to the conclusion that certain hygienic measures should be adopted in order to make the home of a first-class character. They were displeased with the quality of the water supply. They considered that the system of treating the sewage required certain changes, and finally, the most important recommendation they made was that the whole of the furniture in the patients' rooms should be of the type which was to be found in all the great London hospitals and convalescent homes. That involved a serious outlay. He could assure the hon Member for Partick that it was not owing to any negligence on the part of the Office of Works that this expenditure had to be incurred. No doubt the cost could have been anticipated and placed in a lump sum a year ago, but the distinguished scientific men forming the committee desired to see the house as structurally altered before making their final recommendations. Certain alterations had been carried out in order to make escape in case of fire more easy. The Office of Works had been solely actuated by a desire to see that the place should be a real convalescent home. The staff was about to be appointed, and the Office of Works hoped that in about six weeks from now the house would be ready to receive convalescents.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he rose to offer his sincere sympathy to the Secretary of the Treasury. He was sure it was the desire of all sections in the House that he should long continue to occupy the position he held. What did they find to-day? He had almost said that a malignant attack had been made upon the hon. Gentleman. He had been subjected to criticism of the most drastic description. Of course, the attack was somewhat mitigated in the minds of Members when they knew the peculiar circumstances under which the hon. Gentleman was attacked. When the Rules were altered so as to cause the House to meet at two, instead of three o'clock, it was felt that it would be difficult to get a good and constant attendance of Members so soon after lunch. That had always been apparent, and he thought the result of their experience ought to make them go back to the old system. There was no need to go on with the discussion for the Government had now a good working majority. He had been in the House a long time, and he was a good judge of the course of events from the faces of the Whips. When he was in the Lobby he looked at all the Whips he could see. They were greatly agitated some time ago, but they were now in good humour. The hon. Gentleman could now allow the Vote to be taken, with the certainty that the result of the division would not materially affect the elections. He knew the times in which we lived were harassing, uncertain, and critical. One never knew what was going to occur, but it would be an objectionable thing if anything happened on the initiative of the hon. Gentleman opposite from Scotland, or if the blow should come from Peckham. That would be the irony of fate. Although he was opposed to the Government he sometimes pitied them. In order to give a helping hand to people who looked so dreadfully forlorn, he now announced that there was a Government majority and that there was no need for further anxiety.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that it would have been just as possible to have included this sum in the Naval Vote as the £40,000 for the naval cadets at Osborne. He had a definite pledge last year that it would not appear in the Royal Palaces Vote. On 21st April, 1903, he complained that this was a naval and military work and not a work on a Royal palace, and Mr. Powell Williams, whose loss they all deplored, said in reply—

> "The Motion of his hon. friend placed him in a position of considerable difficulty as a member of the Public Accounts Committee."

And then he went on to say—

> "It seemed to him that unless it could be shown that the amount in question applied solely to that portion of Osborne House which was still a Royal palace it had no right to be on the Estimates before the Committee. It was obvious that a service for the Army and Navy should appear on the Army and Navy Estimates."

Had that pledge been carried out? As he understood the position, that undertaking was not really being carried out.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he was not going to waste the time of the Committee, but only in a word to show the absolute ineptitude of the Government and their Departments. Osborne House was not a Royal palace at all; it was private property. If it had been a Royal palace it could not have been disposed of as it had been.

COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton) said that it was rather indecent wasting the time of the Committee while waiting for a Government majority. It was difficult to see why the Secretary to the Treasury should not be able to throw any light on this question. This convalescent home was not likely to be occupied by naval officers, who were not likely to be injured in any war soon, so that it must be occupied by Army officers. He would like to have some more information as to how this sum was to be spent. They knew that some scientific men had gone down there and had made certain recommendations as to the electric light and all that sort of thing, but it would be far better to get more light on the whole subject as to how this money was to be laid out. The quicker this beneficent institution was completed the better. What amount was to be spent on recreation grounds? He always understood that recreation grounds were for men of active life, and not for convalescents. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had come in; and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman could throw some light on this Vote? A great deal of money had been thrown away without proper consideration.

Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) rose in his place and claimed to move that the Question be now put.

Question, "That the Question be now put," put and agreed to.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 124; Noes, 161. (Division List No. 14.)}

AYES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles, T.Gibson(King'sLynn)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Mich. (Lond. Univ.
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt. Hn. Herbt. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James

Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr).
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whitley and Mr. Layland-Barratt.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, Rt.Hn. J.A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T.R. (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn.Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Greene, Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, RtHn.H(Somers'tE
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hunt, Rowland
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Waltamstow)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn.Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H(Ashton und.Lyne)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH claimed that the original Question be now put.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL asked what was the Motion before the Committee?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury has claimed that the original Question be now put.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that the hon. Gentleman did not move the closure.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee has decided that the Question be now put.

MR. WHITLEY asked if the Chairman accepted the Motion for closure.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.) asked if the Chairman put the Question for the closure.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; and it was unanimously accepted by the Committee. The hon. Member for Accrington moved the closure. I put the Question and the Committee accepted it; and then I put the Question under discussion at the time, which the Committee has just disposed of. The Secretary to the Treasury now claims that the original Question be put and that is the question to be decided by the Committee.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said as the matter was one affecting the practice of the House he wished to ask a question regarding it. After the closure had been put and carried they all knew that the original Question might be put; but it should be part and parcel of the same transaction, that was that the hon. Gentleman who moved the closure should also claim that the main Question be put. The Motion for the closure was moved by the hon. Member for Accrington, and the Secretary to the Treasury moved that the main Question be now put. That was not part and parcel of the same transaction, and he never recollected a case in which the closure having been moved by a Member of the Opposition, the main Question was claimed from the Treasury Bench. He protested against it.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It does not signify in the least who moves the closure. The question for the Committee to decide was whether the closure should be applied or not. It does not signify whether the Motion comes from an hon. Gentleman on my right hand or on my left. When the Committee has once decided to closure the Motion, the ordinary procedure follows.

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 170; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 15.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (Lynn Regis)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feethan
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry St Edm'ds
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hickman, Sir Alfred

Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H(Somers't, E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F(Sheffield, Brightside)
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hunt, Rowland
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W.(Stalybridge
Ridley, Forde (Bethnal Green)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, H. C (North'mb Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice, Capt E. C(S Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley

Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas,Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whitley and Mr. Trevelyan.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £18,800, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he did not now intend to move a reduction, he merely wished to inquire whether these improvements had been sanctioned by th eformer Estimate, or whether the Government had exceeded the original Estimate and had now come to the House to ask them to sanction this extra amount. He also wished to ask for some information as to what these improvements were; whether they were going to be improvements or not, or what was going to be done to facilitate the traffic and the convenience of those who lived in London. He would also like to see a plan of the improvements which were to be made.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he thought it would have been better if the Department under whose care St. James's Park came had submitted to the House last session the old plans of the park, so that hon. Members could have carried in their minds the suggested alterations and alleged improvements which had been carried out there. Had those plans been submitted, suggestions might have been made which would have led to considerable improvements in the plan as now revealed by the work as finished. He suggested, if it were possible, that we should depart from the German and French method of Haussmannising our parks in this country, the only result was to make London a second-rate Berlin, a fourth-rate Paris, or a fifth-rate Vienna. He preferred the old Mall as it was, and he certainly regretted that the improvement necessitated, if it did necessitate it, which he doubted, the getting rid of so many old trees. Dealing with the improvement as it was, he said immediately in front of the Palace there was scope for making improvement, and he trusted that some attempt would be made to raise the lawns so as to hide the stone palisade, which, in his opinion, was rather too high. There was a still more important point, assuming that the new street from the Palace to Spring Gardens was carried out, and the Mall was carried straight from the Palace to Charing Cross, care should be taken that private enterprise and vested interests did not vulgarise what public money was trying to improve. Battersea had a particular claim on the Government in this matter, as £15,000 was to be diverted from the Battersea Park Fund in connection with the improvement of the eastern side of the Mall. Battersea was nothing if not generous and magnanimous, but they did like to be æsthetic and artistic. They did not object to being despoiled of this money provided it was spent in accordance with the true canons of art as understood in Battersea, but he doubted whether that condition would be fulfilled in this case. When the road was completed and the Nelson Column or the King Charles statue was made the visual objective, looking from Buckingham Palace, it would doubtless be a desirable improvement for vehicular traffic, but one would then be confronted by the circular sweep at the northern part of Northumberland Avenue. The Grand Hotel was not a particularly handsome building, but it had not been vulgarised by sky-signs or advertisements of meat extract or pills, as was the case with the building on the western side of Northumberland Avenue. The only result of the expenditure of Battersea's £15,000 would be to see on the top of a high building in vulgar letters a bold blinking beacon advertising Bovril. Battersea protested against spending £15,000 to give this extract bold advertisement, and he suggested there was a way in which the noble Lord could deal with the advertiser.

This extract of meat claimed Royal Letters patent; the company had a royal crown on top of Bovril, on each side of it the royal monogram E.R., and underneath a vulgar illuminated sign. It seemed to him that advertisers holding the Royal Letters patent ought to withdraw such a sign in deference to the King, or out of regard for the amenities of the district. It they would not do so, he suggested that the noble Lord should advise the King to withdraw the Royal Letters patent from all their other advertisements until this sign was withdrawn. That is what he would do if he were King. If the noble Lord hesitated to adopt so drastic a measure, he might remember that in the House of Lords there were certain directors of this company, and he might appeal to them to withdraw the objectionable sign. If that were not successful, then other steps should be taken to prevent a public improvement being so vulgarised. Amongst other works which had been carried out he had noticed what appeared to be the beginning of a vehicular road across the small suspension bridge. He hoped there was no intention of making such a road; it was not required, and it would spoil one of the very finest views that he knew. He trusted that the noble Lord would display the artistic traditions of his house, and make the parks and open spaces even more beautiful than they now were.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER, who thought the alterations would be a real improvement, understood that the plans were all prepared long ago. If that was so, why was this additional Vote brought in now instead of having been included in the original Estimates for the year? Long before the Estimates were introduced it was known that this improvement was to be undertaken, and the matters mentioned in this item were such that anybody would have known were certain to be included in such an undertaking.

Mr. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) entirely sympathised with the remarks of the hon. Member for Battersea. The Board of Works had acted in a most autocratic manner. Without having given notice to anyone they had proceeded to cut down trees, and they now asked the Committee to sanction the expenditure which had been incurred. The Estimate had been grossly exceeded. St. James's Park was one of the things in London of which they had every reason to be proud, and when he remembered the artistic demerits of Buckingham Palace he was not so sure that our ancestors were not wise to exclude it from view as much as possible. He suggested that if the arrangements with regard to St. James's Park were to be altered, the paths crossing the park should be kept open until eight o'clock in the evening all the year round. This would be a great convenience to Members on leaving the House at half-past seven.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) asked whether in this sum of £18,800 was included the amount necessary for carrying through the Mall and pulling down the houses in Spring Gardens; when that work was likely to be undertaken, what class of trees were to be planted in the Mall—whether lime or elm—and when the new thoroughfare was likely to be carried through to Trafalgar Square.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said that, while he sympathised with the remarks of the hon. Member for Battersea, he sympathised still more with the people of Ireland who, although they had not been consulted in the matter at all, and would never receive any benefit from the improvement, yet had to contribute very substantially towards the cost. He understood that the improvement had been brought about by the erection of a memorial to Queen Victoria, and that the country had subscribed £250,000 for the purpose. He had nothing to say about that, but to ask Ireland to subscribe this amount at a time when the Estimates were growing yearly was very unjust, more especially when they had no assurance that this Estimate was going to be the last one on this particular improvement. He protested against the spending of this money, and he moved a reduction of the Vote by £5,000.

Motion made, and Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £13,800, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. O'Mara.*)

MR. MALCOLM thought this was a proper occasion on behalf of a great many Members of the House and a large section of the public to congratulate the Board of Works upon the undoubted improvement now being effected in the Mall. One great advantage of it was that Buckingham Palace was in the middle of a beautiful view and made an attractive end to the new boulevard. With regard to the trees he had not shed a single tear over those cut down in the Mall, and he thought the trees that had just been planted would redound to the beauty of the Mall in time. The improvement made by the cutting down of the trees in Piccadilly was also a matter for congratulation, and he was glad that the Home Secretary had not departed from the original plan. He associated himself with the remarks of the hon. Member for Battersea with regard to sky signs, which he hoped the Board of Works would take under their special protection and insist upon being removed where possible. They were positively ugly and an eyesore wherever they were placed, and it was very necessary and advisable that either the Office of Works, His Majesty, or the House of Lords should take a high line and have those sky signs taken down. He congratulated the Office of Works upon the improvements which had been made, which were being admired by foreigners as well as by people in this country.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire) wished the noble Lord to take into consideration the planting of another class of trees in St. James's Park. They had in the past devoted themselves too much to planting planes, and to have them all over London would be very monotonous. He did not ask for elms, because they did not grow well in London. He should like to see more limes planted, for they stood the London atmosphere quite as well as planes. He hoped the noble Lord would also consider the removal of the beautiful Burlington House colonnade into St. James's Park.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES very much regretted the cutting down of some 400 trees in the Mall to carry out these improvements. The whole charm of Kensington Park, Hyde Park, St. James's Park, and Regent's Park was that they imparted to this grimy brick city an element of beauty and freshness as though they formed an emerald chain hung round smoky London. To him their beauty arose from the fact that there were so many green things growing, and this had been very much affected by the cutting down of those trees. He was not going to criticise the general architecture of the scheme, but he thought the suggestion that the beautiful Burlington House colonnade might be employed in the ornamental portion of the Mall was a good one. There was one other point. He noticed that in these new works on the Mall a forty-foot road had been begun, and it had been made in the direction of the Green Park to within about twenty feet of the rails, where it stopped short. Was it intended to continue that road across the Green Park? There was a refuge in the middle which suggested that it was intended to make a footpath alone. He did not think such a road would have been started unless the intention was to carry it across the Park, for it was at present a *cul de sac* leading to nowhere. Was there any intention to carry that road across the Green Park? If so it would spoil the Green Park and would add nothing to the traffic facilities. He hoped he would have a satisfactory assurance about this matter. The opening of the Mall would undoubtedly be of the greatest possible advantage to London, because it would afford a means of going from west to east and east to west which would be of great value, because it would relieve the traffic of Piccadilly, the Strand, and Fleet Street; and the Mall would form such a thoroughfare as no other city in the world possessed. He would like to know where the Mall road was going to come out. If it was to open out at Charing Cross it would largely add to the congestion of the traffic there, because already four or five roads met there. They had at Charing Cross a sort of wheel of which that centre was the hub, and the amount of traffic there at the present time caused great inconvenience. He suggested that instead of the road of the Mall coming out at Charing Cross it should be taken to the south of the new Admiralty buildings to Whitehall Place. That would give a side entrance to the Embankment, and would very much relieve Charing Cross. He was very anxious that this new thoroughfare should relieve the traffic and not add to the congestion which already existed at Charing Cross. He made this suggestion for what it was worth. He noticed that this Supplementary Estimate was twice as much as the original Estimate, and how it could be called supplementary he could not understand. This alteration had been accompanied by a regrettable destruction of the green of London, but he believed that when it was finished, especially if carried out in the way he suggested through Whitehall Place, it would be a great advantage to the metropolis.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said he was sorry he could not agree with the suggestion of the hon. Member for King's Lynn that the new avenue should be diverted to the south of the Admiralty. The adoption of that suggestion would involve a diversion of many yards, and it would bring out the road near the old Admiralty pay office, and the congestion the hon. Member wished to avoid at Charing Cross would take place there. He believed the eastern end of the Mall would come out at the best place. The confusion and congestion of traffic which the hon. Member anticipated would not be to the extent he imagined. He was sorry to say that the old colonnade of the old Burlington Arcade had during the fifty years it had been in Battersea Park lost its beautiful chiselling. For that reason the colonnade would not be suitable for the new avenue, though it would otherwise have lent itself to this particular improvement. He regretted the extravagance of the Office of Works in connection with this particular improvement.

*Lord BALCARRES said he thought what had been said by the hon. Member for Battersea was a sufficient reply to his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn in regard to the colonnade in Battersea Park. As to the footpaths in St. James's Park he could not give any undertaking now that they would be kept open to a later hour than at present. This question, however, scarcely arose on the Supplementary Estimate, and perhaps the hon. Member would raise it at another time when it could be considered. He thought it was quite out of the question to suggest at this stage of the proceedings that the route should be altered and that another on the west side of the Admiralty should be substituted. The hon. Member for Lichfield had suggested that these plans had been prepared long ago, and that the Office of Works had withheld them.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said his complaint was that the plans having been prepared in time, the sum was not in the original Estimate.

*Lord BALCARRES said that was not the case. The plans were not prepared as early as the Estimates for 1903–4, and on that account they did not appear in the original Estimates. The hon. Member opposite had suggested that the work had been unduly hurried on. In a sense the work had been hurried on, because the memorial of Her late Majesty had made so much progress that it was impossible to leave St. James's Park in the condition in which it was. They had to undertake the work at the earliest possible moment. It was most desirable that the work should be carried out by the memorial authorities, and the Office of Works concurrently. The Queen Victoria memorial fund was managed wholly independently of the Office of Works. A very large sum of money was received for the memorial, and those who had charge of it went into the matter carefully. It was suggested that part of the main scheme should be a great group of statuary at the east front of Buckingham Palace. That was a very large affair, and when the memorial authorities began their work, the arrangements required for the parterres, drainage, and lighting, rendered it necessary for the Office of Works to co-operate with them. Someone had suggested that they ought to have taken the House into their confidence in this matter. The last thing they should have thought of doing was to steal a march on the House of Commons, but he would point out that the plans of the memorial and their effect on the thoroughfare in St. James's Park were made public a long time ago, and they indicated the line which the avenue would inevitably have to take. As lately as last session these plans were again exhibited so as to make it quite clear that the general line would be down the centre of the Mall. But until measurements were taken and estimates received, it was wholly impossible for the Office of Works to present an Estimate to Parliament. His hon. friend had asked whether it was proposed to make a thoroughfare northwards across the Green Park. There was no intention of the kind. The idea was that from the monument northwards groups of trees should be planted so as to make a great vista towards the north. He wished to remind the hon. Member for Battersea that the money arising from the park there was given to that neighbourhood by the Government, and not taken by the Government from Battersea. The money was to be provided for by a Bill now before the House. That had nothing to do with the Supplementary Estimate presented to-day. The Supplementary Estimate dealt with improvements in the Mall westward from the Steps. They proposed that the work from the Duke of York's Steps to Charing Cross should be dealt with by funds provided by Bill. The Office of Works had in Consols a sum of money which was the balance from the formation of Battersea Park fifty years ago. That Act stated that the money might be applied at the discretion of Parliament in or near the Metropolis. He could not discuss that matter now.

An hon. Member had referred to the class of trees which were to be planted. He should like very much that the hon. Member would confer with the officials of the Office of Works on that matter. The trees which had been planted in the Mall were exclusively plane trees, being considered most desirable from the fact that they had a deciduous bark. When they were trying to make a great and homogeneous avenue, it was probably wisest and best to plant only one variety of trees. He would point out that the trees already in The Mall really had no chance. Some of them had been ekeing out a precarious existence in three feet of solid gravel. The young trees recently planted had been planted at great expense and with exceptional care in the finest soil available, and there was every reason to hope, humanly speaking, that within twenty years these trees would have obtained greater size than many of the trees which had been there a hundred years. His hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn had protested against the destruction of the green of London. He would like to inform the Committee that at this moment there were more trees and a larger grass area in St. James's Park than twelve months ago. He was glad the hon. Member for Battersea had referred to the advertising nuisances which everybody who travelled down the Mall must have noticed. One firm displaying the Royal monogram and an Imperial crown flashed its message down to the very windows of the Sovereign's palace. The Office of Works had no jurisdiction in the matter, but he could say that the fact of public attention having been drawn to this matter must unfailingly give a great stimulus to the movement now on foot to give public authorities the right to regulate the advertising nuisance. When the Mall improvement was completed it would be a great convenience to the whole of London. He rather deprecated the attack which had been made upon some of the trees. There were trees which were small and "consumptive," no doubt, but so at one time were many of the trees which now form the magnificent avenues such as those in Kensington Gardens; and when completed this avenue, besides being of immense service to the metropolis, would be a dignified approach to the memorial to Her late Majesty.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he believed that this improvement would be a great success. The explanations of the noble Lord had been most lucid, and considering only the information which the Committtee had been able to obtain from him, the noble Lord had proved a great acquisition to the Treasury Bench. It might be quite true, as the noble Lord had said, that the measurements of the last plans of his Department were not ready in time for the Estimates of last year. But why were they not? The plans of the memorial and the road had been prepared years ago and exhibited in the Tea Room and also to the public, and, therefore, it would have been very simple for the Department to take out the measurements in time to prepare for the original Estimates, instead of withholding them for a Supplementary Estimate. It was the fault of the Department that they were so slow in preparing their measurements.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he was one of those who thought that this change was an enormous improvement, and would make a magnificent thoroughfare through the Park. It would make a very short cut between Charing Cross and Victoria, and there would be an enormous traffic between the two points which would rather damage it as an ornamental road. He did not believe that omnibuses and trams would ever be allowed there, but as a short cut there would be an enormous pressure of traffic. He thought the Department should consider whether a subway should not be put down beneath the road for tramways and heavy traffic. Such a subway in London would be a very large and important means of getting rid of heavy traffic; and no damage would be done to anybody or anything if, on this great road, the enormous traffic from Charing Cross to Victoria could be carried on by means of a subway. He fancied that it was rather revolutionary to talk of a subway under St. James's Park, but the matter might be considered by the Department.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said that he noticed that one of the items was for wood paving on the Mall. He did not see at all why that should be done out of public funds and not out of the rates. Why should his constituents pay for roads for the people of London? All that district was very wealthy indeed, and the people there were quite able to bear their own burden.

Lord BALCARRES said he was glad to think that the expense of road-making and road-maintenance in these parks was not so heavy as some hon. Members imagined. From time immemorial the roads in these public parks had been paid for by Parliament and not out of local rates.

Mr. SOARES said that his constituents were paying for these London roads as well as for their own.

Lord BALCARRES said that if the hon. Member's constituents were one of these days to go for a drive down the Mall they would be thoroughly well repaid for their contribution. As to a subway, he confessed that the question had not occurred to him, and he did not know whether it had been considered by the Board of Works. He would, however, make further inquiry.

Mr. WHITLEY asked if this was a final Estimate for this improvement, or did the noble Lord anticipate any further call on Parliament for it?

Lord BALCARRES said he did not like to claim finality for that Vote, but he thought it was, subject to the assent of Parliament being given to the Battersea Park Bill, when the surplus from the fund dealt with by that measure would be devoted to the eastern end of this extension.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £31,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Stationery, Printing, and Binding for the Public Service to pay the Expenses of the Stationery Office, and the Cost of Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

Mr. WHITLEY said he had put down an Amendment to reduce this Vote by £1,000, in order to call attention to the very serious and increasing extravagance of this Department. It was not the first time he had called attention to the extravagance of this Vote. Four years ago the Vote amounted to £507,000; now it came to £732,000. If it were not for the sale of old materials in South Africa which would not recur they would have had to add £17,000, which would have made the total Vote £750,000 or three-quarters of a million spent on the Stationery Office. Two years ago they were told the increase in the Vote was due to the war, and that when the war was over the sum would go down again. Last year there was a reduction in the Estimates of £60,000, but when the Supplementary Estimates came forward they were asked to go back on more than half that reduction, for the total sum now required was £48,000 and not £31,000 as put from the Chair. He wished to make one suggestion by which a saving on this Vote might be accomplished. Since the new Rules were adopted replies were circulated to unstarred Questions. He was not aware that any hon. Member asked for that. When he put a Question to the predecessor to the Secretary to the Treasury he was informed that Members wished the unstarred Questions to be circulated in that form in order that they might send them to their constituents to show what important persons they were. He had never heard of any such request. He found the mass of Papers which was circulated every morning a nuisance. The hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty was very fond of asking Questions, both starred and unstarred, and what the hon. Member cost the Exchequer in this way he could not imagine. Sometimes a sheet was taken up in a Question and Answer occupying five lines, and there was nothing on the back of the page. It was an outrageous piece of extravagance that printing should be done in that fashion. Why should not the Questions and Answers be printed continuously and on both sides of the paper. He wished the Secretary to the Treasury would state what the cost of printing and circulating the Answers to unstarred Questions was during last session, and also how much would be saved if the Answers were printed continuously and on both sides of the paper. It was a nuisance that hon. Members should be flooded with Answers to other hon. Members' unstarred Questions. If an hon. Member wished his Question and the Answer to it circulated, he could send them up to the Press Gallery, and arrange for their circulation himself. At present half to three-quarters of the Papers circulated consisted of Answers to unstarred Questions. That was one way in which expenditure could be reduced. Another way would be to estimate more carefully the requirements of the House as regarded Blue-books and other publications. He would like to have a statement of what the wastage was annually in connection with publications which were not circulated. The officials might not be able to estimate exactly what would be required, but it would be better that Members should run short of publications occasionally than that an immense number of copies should be wasted. He moved the reduction of the Vote as an emphatic protest against what he considered the scandalous extravagance of the Department.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £30,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said he heartily associated himself with the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken with reference to the unstarred Questions. Their bulk was a great nuisance, and people did not want them. As regarded wastage, he thought it was on the whole better that there should be a certain amount of wastage rather than Members should be unable to obtain the Blue-books they might require. It would be extremely convenient if a registered telegraph address and also one of the telephone numbers of the House were printed on the notepaper. There were frequent complaints in reference to the present long address for telegraphic purposes. As regarded *The Parliamentary Debates*, the contract was constantly changing, and he did not know precisely what it now was. At present the reports were an extraordinary jumble. Sometimes hon. Members got other hon. Members' speeches for reference and the speeches were often extraordinary nonsense. If the gentlemen who were called the official reporters received £9,500 a year, he thought it was a large sum to get for doing work so badly. He thought *The Times resumé* was infinitely better than the official report. If the official reporters had to supply a verbatim report, they fell lamentably short of their duty. He agreed with the hon. Member for Halifax that the bulk of the unstarred Questions circulated should be reduced.

*MR. BULL (Hammersmith) said he wished to draw attention to the way in which the Historical Manuscripts Reports were printed, and the poorness of the paper used for so valuable and permanent a work.

*The CHAIRMAN said that would not be in order.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) said he wished to know what was the exact amount of the credit balance from South Africa? With regard to the Parliamentary reports his experience was that the reporting was excellent.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he agreed with the criticisms with regard to the enormous increase of the Vote. He thought it was due to a want of proper supervision. He wished to know who was directly responsible for checking the accounts of the Department. In his opinion no one man could possibly discharge the duty properly, and he suggested that a Committee of three Members should be appointed to supervise the Department. That would not necessarily mean superseding the official in charge, but it would be a check on extravagance. He had been a member of a Committee which had inquired into the matter a few years ago, and it was then found that there was no full open competition for the contracts. There appeared to be an opinion that when a firm once obtained a contract and discharged the work properly there was no necessity for a new contract. In his opinion enormous fortunes were being gained from the way in which Parliamentary printing was conducted. He would suggest that the contracts should be perfectly open. Last session a debate on an important subject had to be adjourned because the Parliamentary printers had undertaken so much work that they were not able to have the Papers ready for the day allotted for the debate. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member that answers to unstarred Questions should not be circulated, if that were adopted the only way of arriving at an Answer to a Question in which one was interested asked by another hon. Member would be to run round the House and try and find the Member who asked the Question.

Mr. MALCOLM said his suggestion was that instead of having fifty or sixty sheets of paper sent to them hon. Members should have all the Answers to unstarred Questions sent on one Paper.

Mr. DALZIEL: If the hon. Member did not suggest that the Answers should not be circulated——

Mr. WHITLEY (interrupting) said what he complained of was the bulk of the Papers, which might be reduced by 80 per cent.

Mr. DALZIEL regretted that he did not quite follow the point raised. If the hon. Gentleman suggested that on the ground of economy the Answers to unstarred Questions should not be circulated, he hoped that his suggestion would not be followed. An hon. Member opposite wanted to make it easier for people to telegraph to Members. If he had his way he would charge double, as it seemed to him they ought not to do anything to facilitate the addition to the many communications they now received. With regard to the question of the reporting, there had been several Committees to consider that question, and it was not fair to blame the reporters for not giving accurate accounts of the speeches made in this House unless they were asked to supply a verbatim report. This House had left to their discretion the question whether the speeches should be reported fully or not, and it was left to the commonsense of the reporter to make an intelligible report of the speeches made. If in the exercise of that discretion he did not make it read as well as it might, it was not the fault of the reporter but the system. Nothing less than a verbatim report was of any use as a record, and nothing else was worth the money. They all knew that when a Minister looked at the report of his speech he had the right to take out what he did not like, and put in something he did, and when hon. Members came down a year after to pin a Minister to the statements he had made they found in the *Debates* quite a different version. It seemed to him they must make up their minds either to carry out the recommendations of the various Committees, and have a verbatim report, or else leave the matter to the discretion of the gentlemen who reported the speeches as at present.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said the hon. Member opposite proposed to add to the horrors of this House. He proposed to add verbatim reports of the speeches made in the House. The imagination recoiled from such a suggestion.

MR. DALZIEL: I said it was the only thing to do.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said if hon. Members were really reported verbatim many of them would be very much amazed when they read their speeches, for only about one in ten was capable of finishing a sentence. With regard to these reports he noticed that sometimes a Member would be reported in the first person and sometimes in the third. One would suppose that that would depend on the eminence of the Member, such as members of the Treasury Bench, for instance; that there would be some rule. But he had noticed that the same Member was reported sometimes in the first person, sometimes in the third, and sometimes in the first and third in the same speech. Some understanding surely might be arrived at between the Treasury and the contractors in this matter, as to some definite rule being adopted which should be adhered to. There was one very great defect in these *Parliamentary Debates*, which was that far too much time was taken in the printing of the reports, and not enough time was left to the Members for correction. He would suggest that the Treasury should insist that the printing should take one day less, and that Members should be given one day more for corrections. With regard to the unstarred Questions, he agreed with the suggestion of his hon. friend. The unstarred Questions and their Answers did account for the bulk of the Papers circulated. That more dignified document the Votes and Proceedings was printed on both sides of the paper and a considerable amount of matter was got into a single sheet. He thought the practice might be adopted in the case of the unstarred Questions, in which case the objections of his hon. friend would be got rid of. There was a very large increase in the printing and publishing department owing to the increased demand of the Inland Revenue under a new system adopted by that Department. But he understood that that new system was of such doubtful merit that it would have to be abandoned.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he had very little sympathy with what was now going on. There was great complaint on both sides of the House as to the amount spent on the Papers circulated to hon. Members, and suggestions were made with a view to economy. If the suggestion of hon. Members was carried out, the difference in the price of the Paper now and the price then would be at the most 2s. a day. He had still less sympathy with the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who was extremely anxious that his speech and others should be reported more approximately verbatim than at present.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: On the contrary I objected to it.

MR. LABOUCHERE said then he did not know what the hon. Gentleman was talking about. A great many hon. Members, at all events, objected to their speeches not being reported verbatim. There were gentlemen in the Gallery perfectly ready to report speeches for those hon. Gentlemen which they could send down to their constituents, but whether their constituents would peruse them he did not know. The fact that hon. Gentlemen had to realise when they made a speech in this House, was that that speech was not going to boom through futurity. Every hon. Member who spoke looked upon his speech as an epoch-making speech, but how many speeches were remembered three days after they were delivered. The hon. Member for King's Lynn wished for further time to correct his speeches. Why should he correct them at all? There could be no particular object, for he surely was not under the impression that they were all going to read them. Let not hon. Members exaggerate the importance of the question of reporting. Every few years they had a long debate, and the general feeling was that speeches should be reported verbatim, and some years ago in one of those discussions a proposal was made that there should be a trap in front of the Table, and that every ten minutes a reporter should come up through the trap to catch the words that might be missed in the Gallery. It seemed to him that there should be, as in France, a *précis* of the debate for general purposes, and that only those things which were worth remembering should be put into the official report. If hon. Members studied, as diligently as he had, other hon. Members when making a speech, they would find the hon. Gentleman repeating the same thing over and over again, and it could not be said to be desirable that the unfortunate reporter should be compelled to take down all those repetitions. How many numbers of *Hansard* were bought in a year by Members of this House? [AN HON. MEMBER: None, we get them free.] That was true, but they would not buy them if they did not get them free. Putting aside public institutions, he doubted whether a couple of hundred were sold. Of course, the speeches of Ministers were important, but not on account of the ability of the right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench who made them, but because they did not speak for themselves, but for the country, or a policy, or a Party, and, therefore, it was necessary that there should be some record of what they stated. The debates would frequently be compressed if there were no reporters in the Gallery at all. He appealed to the Committee not to exaggerate these trifles, or to imagine that the country cared one sixpence whether they had the speeches of Members or whether they had them not.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) suggested that Answers to Questions should follow each other consecutively, but only on one side of the paper. The system of printing Questions and Answers on double pages was most inconvenient, and he hoped that whatever course might be taken with regard to printing more than one on a page the pages would be kept separate.

***SIR A. HAYTER** (Walsall) was sure the Committee would desire to place the blame, if any, for the increase upon the right shoulders. The Public Accounts Committee had had before them Mr. Pigott, the head of the Stationery Office, who distinctly explained that the increase was not within the control of that Department. The public Departments them selves, and not Mr. Pigott, were responsible. The Departments estimated what they would require, and the increased Estimate was due to the fact that the Departments had made increased demands upon the Stationery Office. He thought he ought to make that statement in justice to a public servant. With regard to the Blue-books all public libraries in large towns had power to ask for copies. In this way some of the spare copies went, and it was very difficult to estimate what the exact demand would be.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) asked whether the contractors for *The Official Debates* were permitted to act also for any newspaper. His reason for asking was that the dissatisfaction with the reports might proceed from the suspicion that in allotting space to Members too much consideration was given to journalistic, rather than strictly historical ideas. With regard to the suggestion that there should no longer be any circulation of Answers to unstarred Questions, he was confident that that would lead to a large increase of starred Questions. These Questions and Answers were really debates in epitome. They were a safety valve which probably aved the House the times and trouble of debating many subjects.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) thought that there was another aspect to the question of the reporting of the debates, and that was from the point of view of the public interest. The House had long ago decided that it ought to have a record of its debates. The question was whether the present report answered the purpose. Could it be made better at its present cost? He thought it could. The House had derived no advantage from the improvements effected in printing of late years; its reports were supplied no more expeditiously than they were, say, ten years ago. Would the newly appointed Secretary to the Treasury state his views on the question of reporting, and was he prepared carefully to consider the question? Two or three Committees had presented Reports on the subject, but their recommendations had been ignored. Speeches of journalistic interest were always reported, but there were other speeches, not so attractive perhaps in form, but which, coming from Members specially informed, contained matter particularly suited for a record. Those speeches did not at present get thoroughly reported in *Hansard*, and consequently a great deal of material was lost to the

House which might otherwise have been of much assistance to Members who wished for information. The Secretary to the Treasury might receive much help if he would put himself in communication with the Chairman of the Press Gallery Committee, to see whether from the gentlemen concerned in reporting the debates of the House he could get some suggestions. The hon. Member for the Stowmarket Division was entirely mistaken in supposing that too much was paid for the reporting. Reporting daily became more difficult in the House. When there were only the two great divisions in the House it was comparatively easy to estimate what a speaker would say, and there was no difficulty in reporting him. Nowadays, however, when a Member rose it was impossible to say which of four or five policies he was going to support, and much attention was frequently required to discover the real point of his remarks. The House in dealing with its *Hansard* ought not to be niggardly. The salaries paid to the reporters ought to be higher than those paid to the representative of any newspaper, because the work was longer and the responsibility greater. He thought the House had never recognised how good a report they might get if they would only pay a fair price. He hoped the new representative of the Treasury would give careful attention to this matter and see whether he could not put the reporting on a really satisfactory basis.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether it would not be possible at the end of the session to have the debates relating to Ireland published in separate volumes. He believed that the debates were supplied in such a form to members of the Irish Government, and it would be a great convenience to Irish Members at large if such an edition was rendered generally available. The expense would not, he thought, be very large.

MR. GODDARD (Ipswich) pointed out that, although most of the speeches in the debate had been directed to the question of reporting, only £500 of the Supplementary Estimate was concerned in that branch of the Vote, whereas the total, excluding Appropriations-in-aid, amounted to £48,000. He was rather surprised that there should be this very excessive Supplementary Estimate this year. Apparently a good deal of this expenditure had been brought about by the war, and therefore they had very good reason for supposing that when the war was ended there would not be any further necessity for Supplementary Estimates on the Stationery Vote. He was afraid that this Department had been really the butt of nearly every other Department, and they were never likely to effect any economy in the Stationery Vote unless they put a little restraint upon the other Departments; they seemed to be able to call to any extent upon the Stationery Department, which did not seem to have any check whatever upon other Departments. They would not effect any economy until they devised some means of bringing pressure to bear upon the other Departments so as to prevent them making these extra demands. That was the direction in which they would have to look for economy.

*MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I will reply to hon. Members as shortly as I can. At the outset I should like to make this one remark. I am sorry to have to make the confession that, since I have been at the Treasury, I have not been able to give much attention to this matter of the contract for the reporting of the debates. I assure the House that I shall, as soon as I have the opportunity, devote my attention to it, and endeavour to see if I can do something to carry out the wishes of the House. In regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Stowmarket, as far as this contract is concerned, it was presented to the House of Commons as a Parliamentary Paper in the usual course. In regard to Questions, a point which was raised by the hon. Member for Halifax, I have ascertained that the cost last year of the system of circulating unstarred Questions and Answers has led to a very considerable expenditure. The matter is one which is very largely in the hands of the authorities of the House, and I cannot promise to take any immediate steps. I think, however, that I pretty well know what the opinion of the House is on these points, and I shall be very glad to consult with the authorities of the House and see if something cannot be done to meet the clearly expressed wishes of the Committee. I understand that a large number of Members would prefer that the Questions should be printed in the usual way, instead of beginning a new leaf for each Question, and that, I believe, would effect a saving. There might also be a considerable saving in the number of Papers sent out. The hon. Member for Stowmarket asked a Question about stamping the telegraphic address and telephone number upon the notepaper. I hardly like to take the responsibility of doing that without further support from the House, but it is clear that a certain number of hon. Members would find this a convenience, and there would be no difficulty in doing it. I propose, therefore, to see if a stamp can be prepared, and, if so, I will arrange for a certain amount of the new writing-paper to be placed about as an experiment. In reply to the hon. Member for Liverpool, I may say that the amount of money he has mentioned is for stationery supplied in connection with the War Office. As has already been pointed out, it is almost impossible for the Stationery Department to resist any demand made upon it by other Departments, and it has often to supply those demands in an extravagant manner, because they are wanted very quickly, and consequently they are more costly. The House should remember, when complaints are made about the heavy cost of printing and stationery, that it is largely due to the very great demand for information which comes from the House of Commons itself, upon fiscal, War Office and other questions. No doubt this demand for information is perfectly legitimate, and I can only say that the Government will do the best they can to provide that information, and it will be printed in the best possible manner by the Stationery Office. But when the House of Commons complains of this expenditure hon. Members must at the same time remember that they are very largely responsible for that expenditure. So far as I am concerned, I shall do my best to carry out the recommendation which has been presented to us, but I must say that I do not at the present moment look forward to any very substantial reduction in this Vote, although I will make every effort to keep the amount within as moderate limits as possible.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said he understood from the statement made by the hon. Gentleman opposite that a large part of this expenditure had been incurred in respect of printing for the Board of Trade in connection with the inquiries upon trade. Surely that was a thing which was likely to cease after a time, and then they would get some respite from this increased expenditure. With regard to the reports of their proceedings, they were ample, although they were not very efficient. They did not want more money spent on those reports, but they wanted them shorter, and perhaps rather more sensible and clear. He noticed that sometimes the reports were in the first person, and sometimes in the third. He thought at any rate they might always be alike, and that would simplifiy matters a good deal. There should be as much economy as possible in these contracts, especially at this time, when the country was so short of money.

Mr. DALZIEL said some hon. Members thought that the expense incurred in connection with the so-called fiscal inquiry was money which had not been very well spent. How much of the Supplementary Estimate represented money which had been devoted to the cost of printing and stationery in connection with that inquiry?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH replied that he had not the information at present but he would endeavour to ascertain the exact amount. In regard to the Question asked by the hon. Member for the Hallam Division, he understood that there was nothing in the contract to prevent the printing firm or the reporters from undertaking newspaper work.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER: Will the hon. Gentleman rectify that in future, so that the reporting shall be perfectly independent of newspapers.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I cannot undertake to rectify the contract. I think that is very much a matter for the House to deal with itself.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said that with reference to the question raised by the hon. Member for Clare as to the desirability of publishing all the Irish debates together, he would like to inform the hon. Gentleman that the volumes were supplied to the Irish Members of Parliament. He did not think it would entail very much additional expense if some more copies were published. He asked the hon. Gentleman to inquire whether that could be done.

MR. WHITLEY said the hon. Gentleman had very frankly met the chief points raised, and that being so it might seem a little ungracious on his part if he were to press the Amendment. He moved in the interests of economy, and he had elicited the general opinion that the House would support the hon. Gentleman in endeavouring to bring about economies in various directions in connection with the Printing and Stationery Department. The hon. Gentleman was responsible to the Treasury, and he ought to back up the chief of the Printing and Stationery Department in resisting unreasonable demands from the different Departments. He asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. LABOUCHERE said he understood this Vote included the cost of the fiscal inquiry. What amount was devoted to that purpose?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he was unable to state exactly how much should be apportioned for the cost of the inquiry. He would make inquiry in regard to that.

MR. LABOUCHERE said the Committee ought to know now, because they might object to it. The House never agreed to the fiscal inquiry. A mass of statistics had been published which might, or might not, be useful, but surely they ought to know approximately what the cost of the inquiry had been. The Minister in charge of the Vote should have everything at his fingers ends so as to be able to explain every single item.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS III.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for certain Miscellaneous Legal Expenses."

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said the foot-note explanatory of this item was in the following terms—

> "The excess arises in respect of expenses incurred in connection with the arrest and extradition of Whitaker Wright, and the case of the convict Lynchehaun.

He should like a little more information as to the details of this expenditure which he quite approved. He wished to know the exact amount incurred in respect of Whitaker Wright's extradition, because £2,000, merely in respect of his arrest and extradition, was in itself somewhat a large sum. He hoped, however, it was not the whole amount that the Government was going to contribute towards the costs in this matter. The state of affairs in relation to the winding up of companies and the frauds in connection with many of them had been such that it was absolutely deterrent to any private prosecutor to enter upon proceedings and so to add to losses already incurred. This remark applied to the liquidation of too many companies, and the result was, on the one hand, impunity for the offender and absolute waste, as the report of the liquidator of companies showed, of many millions of money, in a manner most detrimental to the true trade interests of the country. It was in the end advantageous to trade that occurrences of this kind should not take place without prosecution. In the debate on the Address the Attorney-General had made a statement not only of the facts from his point of view and also of the law, for which everyone must have the greatest respect, even when, like himself, they ventured to differ from it, but he answered what he supposed to have been some reflections upon his own honour and impartiality in the treatment of this matter.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This Vote is not for the prosecution of Whitaker Wright. It is limited strictly to the expenses of extradition and the hon. Member must confine himself to that.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said he accepted that ruling at once. He only wished to say that the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman as to his own conduct was almost unnecessary, and everyone assented to it without a single reservation. He hoped, however, the right hon. Gentleman would feel that, justice having been vindicated, there was some reason for the course that was taken, and that there was a moral and a legal obligation on the State to do more towards payment of the costs of the prosecution than was implied in this Estimate. This was justified by the result of the trial, which he and others had anticipated, and their action had thus been justified.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) thanked his hon. friend for his frank and friendly words. The total cost of the proceedings for the extradition of Lynchehaun was £1,014, and there was a further claim which was estimated at £300. In the case of Whitaker Wright the total cost was £1,150. Extradition proceedings in America, as his hon. friend was aware, were for various reasons expensive. The amount in this Estimate did not represent what the Government had undertaken to pay in connection with the Whitaker Wright prosecution. These costs would be put on the law charges, which would be brought before the House in the ordinary way.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he ought to move to reduce the Vote by £1,147, the whole of the costs incurred in the Whitaker Wright extradition. The ground of his objection was that Whitaker Wright ought not to have been allowed to escape from this country after the decision of three Judges. He himself thought that Whitaker Wright was likely to escape, and on 11th March he asked a Question—of course, contrary to propriety, because nearly all pertinent Questions in this House were said to be contrary to propriety. His Question was—

> "I beg to ask the Home Secretary what steps, if any, are being taken by the authorities to prevent any attempt to escape from criminal justice by Mr. Whitaker Wright."

And the Home Secretary replied—

> "The hon. Member has given me no notice of that Question; he had better put it on the Paper."

Before he had time to put it on the Paper Whitaker Wright escaped, and was intended to escape. He believed that if Whitaker Wright had been a poor man it would not have been necessary to spend £1,100 to secure his extradition; he would have been instantly arrested. He maintained that the circumstances under which Whitaker Wright was allowed to escape looked as if there was one law for the poor and another for the rich. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill*).

MR. LABOUCHERE said that Whitaker Wright having escaped, it was desirable that the extradition should take place, and that he should be brought back here for trial. What he complained of was that the man was allowed to escape from the country at all. The Law Courts had undoubtedly held that Whitaker Wright had committed a very grave offence for which he ought to be punished, and he ought, therefore, to have been kept under some sort of police surveillance until the Attorney-General issued his warrant for the arrest. Under the circumstances he would vote for the Amendment of his hon. friend.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) thought that the Attorney-General ought to reply. It seemed to him that one of two courses ought to be taken—either that the Attorney-General should acknowledge that he had committed a mistake in this matter, or that there should be an Appropriation-in-aid for this amount out of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's salary.

Sir **ROBERT FINLAY** said he would not be in order in going into the matter beyond the statement he had made the other day in the debate on the Address. The Government took every step in their power, and the extradition proceedings were successful. He had heard no suggestion that there was any remissness on the part of the Home Office, or of anyone connected with the administration of justice in connection with the escape of Whitaker Wright; and he felt sure that the hon. and learned Member was not serious in suggesting that the Home Office had connived at his escape. He submitted that the expenses were properly incurred.

Mr. **SWIFT MACNEILL** said he would not go so far as to say that the Home Office connived at Whitaker Wright's escape, but they neglected their duty. He still held to the opinion that if Whitaker Wright had not been a highly placed gentleman he would not have been allowed to escape.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 126; Noes, 214. (Division List No. 16).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice, Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Swift MacNeill and Mr. Labouchere.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir Wlliam Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert

Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leed
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T.Gibson (King'sLynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir JohnE
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F.Leverton(Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar, (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W.(Stalybridge
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

CLASS IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £29,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) said that as regarded the inspection of national schools in Ireland, he was glad to find that the evening school system which was recently introduced was progressing favourably. The inspectors of the Board were almost unanimous in speaking in praise of the work that was being done. There was, however, one point which he wished to mention; which was of importance not only to every Irishman but also to every educationalist. That was the introduction of the Irish language, which was one of the greatest educational influences in the work of the evening schools. Inspector after inspector referred to the great local interest in education which was aroused by the introduction of the teaching of the Irish language; whereas in districts where it was not taught there was a lack of interest. He appealed to the Chief Secretary to encourage such an awakening of educational development among the people in Ireland. He was, however, sorry and surprised to find that the National Board had recently issued a circular in reference to the teaching of the Irish language in national schools. It pointed out that schools which had not reached a certain standard of efficiency would not be allowed to teach the Irish language as an extra. The Irish language was not mentioned specially, but it was the only language that could be referred to. He did not contend that extras should be taught in all subjects where the school was not up to a certain standard of efficiency; but the teaching of the Irish language had the greatest effect in raising the standard of a school and increasing its efficiency. If the circular were allowed to continue, 50 per cent. of the national schools would be excluded from teaching the Irish language. The circular also stated that no fees for languages could be given for any pupils in a lower standard than the fourth. Scarcely any language was taught in the national schools except the Irish language; and, therefore, it would have been more direct if the Commissioners of National Education had referred to the Irish language alone. There were in Ireland 400,000 pupils enrolled in the first three standards; and if the circular were insisted on they would all be excluded from learning the Irish language. What was the use of teaching a native language unless it were taught from the beginning? He hoped that the Chief Secretary would see that the teaching of the Irish language, which had done so much for educational life in Ireland, would not be hampered by the National Board. With reference to the salaries of teachers, he asked the Chief Secretary a few days ago how many assistant teachers had been promoted from the third grade to the second grade, and the answer was three. He was aware that the Commissioners had certain authority to promote men who were doing good work and pay them accordingly; but in two years only three teachers had been so promoted. The Commissioners had not availed of their power in this direction, and there was no indication that they proposed to avail of it. At present national teachers in Ireland had very little prospect of promotion. He would ask the Chief Secretary to look carefully into the matter, believing, as he did, that the greatest injury was done to the cause of education in Ireland by the wretchedly inadequate system of payment there in force. In any other country in the world men who had the important work of training the youth were paid well, and it was only in Ireland that such a mean and niggardly system of payment was adopted. He would also ask the Chief Secretary to obtain the withdrawal of the circular issued by the National Board, who appeared to be striving with all their might to prevent the Irish language being taught in the schools.

*MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) advocated the development of the musical capacities of the Irish children, as was being done in the English schools. It was unfortunate that no proper attempt had been made to issue, for school purposes, a collection of Irish folk songs, together with the music for them. If that were done he was sure that the musical culture of the children would be greatly assisted. He hoped the National Board of Education would issue at the earliest moment a proper collection of Irish national songs, not only to the evening continuation schools but also to the day schools. In the preface of a folk-song book for English schools issued a few years ago, Sir C. Villiers Stanford said—

> "In our wide experience preference appears to be given in the schools to songs of an ephemeral character, or to new songs specially written, from which it is impossible to expect any lasting results; for a sound basis of musical feeling can alone be obtained from genuine folk songs, which have grown up along with the development of the country itself, and it is mainly through their influence that we may hope to develop that responsive sympathy which produces national art, artists, and art-lovers."

and he had read that very day a review of Sir Horace Plunkett's, "Ireland in the New Century," which contained this extract—

> "A passionate conviction is gaining ground that if Irish traditions, literature, language, art, music, and culture, are allowed to disappear, it will mean the disappearance of the race; and that the education of the country must be nationalised if our social, intellectual, or even our economic position is to be improved."

It was only by proper collections of these songs that the musical capacity of the people could be developed, and it was the only basis upon which useful results could be obtained. He further hoped that the Chief Secretary would see his way to carry out a reduction of the pupils from sixty to fifty as the average number entitling them to a teacher. An average of sixty very often meant a total attendance of ninety or ninety-five, and one teacher could not be expected to efficiently look after a school with that number of pupils. Finally he hoped the National Board of Education would withdraw the circular relating to the teaching of Irish, in the schools. The Irish language was making rapid strides in the country, and it was because they wanted it encouraged in every manner, and every department, that they urged the Chief Secretary to do all in his power to get the circular withdrawn.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said there was nothing in this Vote pertaining to the circular to which reference had been made. The Committee were dealing with evening continuation classes, and the circular did not refer to evening continuation classes. His views on the Irish language were known, and he need not repeat them. The great increase in the evening continuation schools must be a subject of general congratulation. As a rule, objection was taken to Supplementary Estimates, but he thought this Supplementary Estimate in respect of evening schools ought to be welcomed in all quarters of the House. In 1901 there were only twenty continuation schools, whereas the number was now over 1,000. The development had been so rapid as to exceed the Estimate originally draw up. With regard to the complaint as to slowness of promotion and the inadequacy of the salaries of Irish teachers, he admitted that the promotion was slow, but the remedy was not immediately obvious. The present system had the defect that it had caused a great multiplication of schools. It might be said on that ground that promotion should be more rapid, but that had not been the result. There was no local incentive on the part of managers, as the control was exercised by a central body. Consequently all the teachers in excess of the requirements—not of the number of schools, but of the number of pupils—did not get the promotion which they might expect in this country. At the outset teachers were worse paid in this country than in Ireland, but they had better prospects. This Supplementary Estimate gave some support to the argument which he had frequently used, that the new rules as to salary would be found to work out better than had been supposed would be the case. No less than £14,000 of this Supplementary Estimate was due to salaries and to increments accruing under the new rules. It was a complicated system, under which it was impossible to tell beforehand exactly how much any particular teacher would earn, and consequently at the end of the year there were certain balances of salary to be paid. Until some plan was devised for lessening the number of schools where they were excessive, the teaching profession could not hold out such good prospects in Ireland as in England. He would certainly give his attention to the subject, but it was a matter which would require a good deal of consideration, not only for him, but for Members of the House, before a satisfactory solution could be arrived at.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said everybody recognised that it was impossible on this Supplementary Estimate to go as far into the subject as Irish Members wished, but there would be an opportunity to do so later. He wanted to ask the Chief Secretary if he could give a promise that, if it was found that this circular on extra subjects issued by the National Board of Education, and in which it was said that no fees could be allowed for languages taught to pupils lower than the fourth class—if that circular seriously interfered with the teaching of Irish to large numbers of small children, he would take steps to change the circular in that respect. They knew the right hon. Gentleman had no power over the Board, but no doubt an expression of his opinion would carry considerable weight. He was very glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman was in favour of the Irish language being taught. The result of excluding all classes below the fourth class from participating in the fees for teaching languages would be to exclude an immense number of Irish children from the teaching of their own language.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.) said it was very hard that the Irish language should not be universally taught in the schools. He had been a professor of languages for over forty years and could testify to the value of the Irish language. The proper time to commence to teach it was when the pupils were quite young, and, if they deprived the youngest pupils of that privilege, it was possible that they would never learn the language at all. He also advocated the teaching of the Irish national songs. The Irish were a musical race, and it would be the greatest pity to deprive them of the pleasure and advantage to be gained from a study of music.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) (EQUIVALENT GRANT).

MR. SHEEHY (Meath, S.) said that any hon. Member who followed the story of the way in which Ireland had been treated in regard to the equivalent grant with respect to Irish technical education, would see that all through the piece a system of chicanery had been pursued by the authorities with the collusion of the Treasury. As everybody knew, although the Technical Education Act was passed in 1889, no money passed under that Act to Irish education. By Clause 3 of that Act, however, the local authorities of England and Wales were permitted to levy a rate on the locality, which was limited to one penny in the pound, and the equivalent of the amount collected in the locality was granted by the Treasury. In the following year, 1890, by some extraordinary means, a sum of £1,304,000 derived under the Customs and Excise Act was placed at the disposal of Parliament and appropriated in the proportions of 80, 11, and 9. England received £1,043,200, Scotland £143,440, and Ireland £117,620. Whilst a certain proportion of the English and Scotch grants were devoted to technical education, the corresponding proportion allotted to Ireland did not go in that direction. A part of it was devoted to increasing the salaries of the teachers in the national schools, and some was used by the Treasury to pay off an old debt of the Treasury to the national school teachers in regard to their claims for superannuation. Owing to the special regulations made in respect to Ireland with regard to this grant, the operation of the Act of 1889 in Ireland became impossible, and the local bodies had to resort to all kinds of expedients to secure the grant at all. It was not till ten years after the Local Government Act was passed for England and Wales that a similar Act was passed for Ireland, and under that Act the country for the first time was able to secure large grants and give a really good start to technical education. In the previous year the functions of the Science and Art Department had been transferred to the Board of Agriculture and Technical Education, and within a year it was discovered that, although the functions of the Science and Art Department with regard to technical education were so transferred, no funds had been transferred to carry them out. For ten years after the passing of the Technical Education Act, England and Scotland had full advantage of the fund for technical education, with the result that England had received some £10,000,000 and Scotland £800,000, but Ireland during that period only received some £80,000. It might be said that Ireland had received all she was entitled to under the Act, but what they complained of was that ever since the passing of the Act of 1889 the Treasury, with the collusion of the Science and Art Department, had through a policy of chicanery kept the grants to which Ireland was entitled from benefiting her. Year after year the sums which under the Act should have been devoted to technical education had been devoted to other purposes entirely. From 1890 to 1897 the Treasury obtained from this House £58,629 for technical education in Ireland, not a penny of which was spent for that purpose. He desired to know what had become of that money and why had Ireland by this special regulation been deprived of it.

So far as England and Scotland were concerned that money was given annually, but when it came to Ireland a new system was adopted and they were told that the grant was to terminate in 1904. Credit had to be given for the fact that the Chief Secretary shared the views of the Irish representatives on this matter, but unfortunately he was powerless to alter it. It had been said that the local councils did not use the power they had to strike a penny rate and demand the equivalent grant from the Treasury. That was true, because at the time, before the Irish Local Government Act, the local bodies of Ireland were the old grand juries, who were only representative of property, and they were not likely to strike a rate which would affect their property. It did not lie with hon. Members opposite to claim that the loss to Ireland during all these years was due to the action of the local boards; it was due rather to the manner in which the Minute was drawn and the way in which the boards had been constituted. The Treasury, he asserted, had used some part of the Irish fund to pay off old debts due to the teachers of Ireland, and Treasury jealousy and jugglery had contributed to the impoverishment of Ireland in the matter of technical education. Every step taken by the local bodies to assist this education had been thwarted by the Treasury. Deputations had waited on the Chief Secretary, and although the right hon. Gentleman had consented to make an annual grant there was nothing to secure the payment of the money which they claimed. The Treasury had in fact disobeyed Parliament in this matter by retaining the money which should have been applied to technical education, or by spending it illegally. England and Scotland had had their share of this money—and an immense share it was—but it had been witheld from Ireland. There was no class of his countrymen at the present time which did not feel that Ireland had been most unjustly treated in this question, and only that day he had received a telegram from a Conservative gentleman—a member of a county board, congratulating the Irish Party on the action it was taking. His case was that the Treasury had persistently and by every device within its power secured that as little of this money as was possible should go to Ireland, and he now claimed that they should receive, not an empty promise or guarantee, but a distinct pledge that the wrong done should be repaired, and that the money which belonged to Ireland —£58,629—should be at once placed at the disposal of the Irish Board to be dealt with for technical education purposes without interference from the English Department. They wanted some form of finality in this matter; they desired to put an end to this diabolical treatment of Ireland, and they would continue the struggle until they got their rights. He begged to move the Resolution standing in his name.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) seconded the Motion. Time and time again the question of Irish education had been brought forward in that House, and he often asked himself the reason why. This was only one phase of the educational problem in Ireland, and whenever they tried to solve these problems they were always met with the plea that there was no money available for Irish education. Whether it was a question of technical, primary, or higher education in Ireland it was all the same, there was no money to spare. In England money could be found for any purpose that was desired, even for the purchase of battleships which were not required, but when it came to providing technical schools in Ireland, red tape and Government officialdom blocked the way. Now the Irish Members had set themselves to try and find a remedy. They had public opinion in Ireland solidly at their back and technical education committees all over the land had passed resolutions denouncing the action of the Treasury and of the Government in trying to withhold a certain portion of the grant to which they were entitled. The technical education committee of his own city—of which he had been a member for years—had, on the motion of the Catholic priest, seconded by the Protestant minister, passed one of those resolutions. That showed conclusively that this was not a Party or sectional question, but that it was one in which all were deeply interested. Naturally, they in Ireland looked abroad to see how other places were situated in this matter. What was done in the matter of technical education in England, for instance? How much money was spent on it in London alone? Had he not been an Irishman he might have been tempted to wish himself a Londoner, in order to enjoy the educational benefits there to be obtained. In England the technical schools were catered for generously, and even lavishly, but in Ireland they were cribbed, cabined, and confined. What had they done in Ireland with the limited means at their disposal? Some years ago technical education was almost unknown in Ireland. There were a few small schools struggling along in a haphazard fashion, but when the people got local self-government they soon took advantage of the Act, and put in force their rate-levying powers, in order to secure technical instruction for the people. Quickly the schools which were established became successful and the attendance of the pupils rapidly increased. He was present when Mr. Plunkett presented the prizes to the pupils in the Limerick Technical Schools, and when he paid a very high tribute to the pupils for their proficiency in the various classes they had attended. That fact alone should make the Treasury recognise that their claim was a just one, and accede to their wishes.

Now he had a few words to say as to the equivalent grant. Before 1898 Ireland was undoubtedly entitled equally with the rest of the United Kingdom to the share in this grant, but as a matter of fact it had been withheld from them, with the result that the Irish committees had been crippled and had had to work under unfair conditions. He thought they had a very strong case. It might be said that the £55,000 a year was given in lieu of those rights, but that was not understood by anyone, and the Department formally announced to the committees that it was still open to them to earn the other grants in addition to the £55,000. He instanced the Limerick committee as one which, acting on the suggestion and with the approval of the Department, formulated and put into operation a portion of the scheme, on which they were spending £2,000 a year with admittedly excellent results. Of that sum £288 came from a penny rate, and £288 from the equivalent grant, the balance being from the Department, fees from certain science and art payments, and the income from a public hall, which they owned themselves, and which they gave free for technical education purposes. The income of the committee and the expenditure on the scheme were now equal, and the withdrawal of the equivalent grant would necessitate the dropping of nearly £300 a year. Besides, the city would be saddled with the penny rate, which was agreed to on the express understanding that an equivalent sum would be forthcoming from South Kensington. Now the Treasury stepped in to filch away £300 of the miserable income at the disposal of the city. It was no answer to say that the money could be got out of the development grant. That money was due to Ireland independently altogether of the equivalent grant. He asked the Secretary of the Treasury to say whether Ireland's right to the equivalent grant had been revoked by the Local Government Act or the Technical Instruction Act, and, if so, what was the clause or section in either of those Acts revoking it. Hon. Members from Ireland claimed that this money was justly due to Ireland, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would not indulge in sympathetic speeches as the Chief Secretary did so often, but that he would give them some practical sympathy, and show that the claim now put forward would be fairly met.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the action of the Treasury in withholding the Irish Equivalent Grant for Technical Education is a violation of the intention of Parliament and a gross injustice to Ireland."—(*Mr. Sheehy.*)

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he desired in the first instance to express his intense surprise at the absence of the Chief Secretary. The Attorney-General for Ireland was there, but he was not concerned in the discussion of this matter, and could scarcely be said to adequately represent the Irish Government in this matter, which was one of vital importance to Ireland. It had been brought before the Chief Secretary by deputations representing every class, creed, and shade of politics in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman had repeatedly expressed the greatest possible sympathy. He would gather from the expressions of the Chief Secretary that he had been engaged in some sort of controversy with the Treasury on the matter, and that might be the reason for his absence, but it was not a reason which justified his absence. It was nothing short of a scandal that a discussion should take place on this subject in the absence of the principal representative of the Irish Government. They were dealing in this matter primarily with the Treasury, and he was sure those representing that Department would bring to the subject an unprejudiced mind and an anxiety to do what was fair. He had no doubt that the Secretary to the Treasury had tried to make himself acquainted with the merits, but he had not been concerned in this matter; it was quite new to him, and the responsible officer of the Government who had been discussing the matter for two or three years with the representatives of Irish public opinion, was absent from the House. He therefore, on behalf of the representatives of Ireland, entered a protest against the way in which this debate had been treated by the Chief Secretary. He was embarrassed in saying the few words he had to say in the absence of the Chief Secretary. What he desired to do was to quote the right hon. Gentleman's own words. The strongest case that could be made out in favour of the Irish claim was to be found in the speeches of the Chief Secretary. On 1st April last year in this House the right hon. Gentleman spoke on the Irish development grant, and in showing the necessity of the treatment he proposed for that grant, he, as a proof of the way Ireland had been, so to speak, swindled by the Treasury in past times, instanced this very question of the equivalent grant for technical education. He said—

> "What is the result? In the nine years in the case of England between 1892 to 1900, sums amounting to £6,276,404 were devoted to technical education in England and Wales. Ireland lost two years altogether in that period; but in the remaining seven years she was only able to spend £71,900 on technical education, and out of that comparatively insignificant sum no less than £55,000 was expended in the last year."

Then he went on to say that Ireland, because she was not in a position to spend the money that rightly came to her, was immediately robbed of the sum altogether. When last autumn a deputation waited on the Chief Secretary in Dublin Castle—a deputation representing all the county councils in Ireland and men of all Parties and classes in the country—the right hon. Gentleman made a most sympathetic reply and said that he would for the moment put forward what he presumed would be the argument of the Treasury, on which, by inference, at all events, he poured contempt. The right hon. Gentleman went on to point out the history of this thing.

Although his hon. friends who moved and seconded the Motion had put the case clearly and emphatically he thought it would be well to summarise it. The grant with which they were dealing was made under Section 3 of the Technical Instruction Act, 1889. That Act provided that this grant was to be administered from the Science and Art Department in London, and in accordance with regulations made by them. The regulations that were laid down were to the effect that for every penny raised by the local authority from a local rate, a penny would be contributed out of this grant. After an interval of many years, during which, owing to Ireland's unpreparedness, the money did not come to Ireland at all, the Act of 1899 was passed. That Act transferred from the Science and Art Department in London to the new Agriculture and Technical Instruction Department in Dublin all the powers and rights which the Science and Art Department had previously exercised in this matter. That was to say, the new Department in Ireland was to carry out the regulations which had previously been made by the Science and Art Department in London. It was true that with the establishment of the new Department in Ireland a sum of £55,000 was placed at their disposal for the promotion of technical education, and the Treasury might contend that that was in substitution for the grant that previously existed, but he would quote the action of the new Department to refute that. What did the new Department do? The moment these powers of the Science and Art Department were transferred to them they issued a circular to the local bodies in Ireland saying that they had now taken over these powers and explaining to them that for every penny in the £ put on the local rates the new Department were prepared to supply a penny more. He was happy to say that during years past the interest in technical education had increased enormously in Ireland and people were more prepared to undertake the work. Consequently the circulars issued by the new Department had the effect of putting into action all those local bodies up and down the country, and they proceeded at once to tax the localities and put this penny per £ rate on, and so it remained until suddenly the Treasury informed the new Department that they had made a great mistake and that they had no authority to issue the circular, and that the penny in the £ could not be given. The new Department then issued another circular stating that they had made a mistake, and that according to orders received from the Treasury this grant had been withdrawn and that they could not provide the money. The people up and down the country had taxed themselves and had incurred expense and liability in inaugurating a system of technical education on the strength of the undertaking given by the new Department that the arrangements which had previously existed would continue. It was a monstrous thing for any Minister who had any interest whatever in the promotion of technical education in Ireland to attempt for a moment to justify what had happened. As a matter of fact, if the people in the various localities took full advantage of this provision of a penny in the £ it would give a sum of over £60,000 a year. But the proceedings had been gradual, and at the time the grant was withdrawn, the penny in the £ contributed by the Government only amounted to, he thought, £3,500. He was not sure whether it was £3,500 or £7,000 a year. The claim now put forward was a dual claim, first that the original arrangement should stand, and that the penny in the £ should be available all over Ireland wherever the people taxed themselves to that amount. The claim had been whittled down, but at any rate £7,000 should be permanently available. He, for his part, would not be satisfied with this arrangement. The Irish people were in this matter the victims of bad faith; they had been induced to tax themselves for technical education under false pretences; and in the circumstances it was the plain duty of the Treasury to stand by the original arrangement with regard to the equivalent grant. Otherwise the spread of technical education in Ireland would be interrupted and the industrial development of the country arrested. This was not a matter of politics, and he hoped the Unionist Members from Ireland would assist in endeavouring to obtain some justice from the Treasury on this occasion. In the matter of technical education Ireland was behind every civilised nation in Europe, and now that the interest of the people had at last been really awakened, and when they were anxious to tax themselves in order to promote this kind of instruction, surely it was not too much to ask that the engagement solemnly given by the Treasury should be kept and that the Irish people should not be filched of this miserably small sum which was necessary to go on with the work.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) said this question was full of intricacy, but he could say that he approached it with a mind entirely free from prejudice and anxious only to arrive at a conclusion that was fair and just. In the Estimates for 1891–92 grants were for the first time inserted for the purposes of the Technical Education Act of 1889 in the United Kingdom. In 1890 the Local Taxation Act was passed, by which what was known as "the whiskey money" was placed at the disposal of the local authorities who were authorised to utilise it in Great Britain for technical education. The special grant under the Technical Education Act was then withdrawn from Great Britain but continued to hold good with regard to Ireland. Under the Local Taxation Act Ireland received her full share of the "whisky money," out of which a sum of £78,000 a year was allocated to the Commissioners of National Education and the balance to the Intermediate Education Board. Under the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act of 1899 that £78,000 a year was transferred from the Commissioners of National Education to the new Department of Agriculture, and £55,000 a year of that sum was specially earmarked for technical education. He found that in the year 1892 there was on the Estimates a special grant for Ireland of £500; but with the increase of money raised by rates for technical education the grant, corresponding to the rates increased to £3,500, at which amount the grant was continued up to the present moment. This specific sum of £55,000, earmarked for technical instruction, was naturally regarded by the Treasury as superseding the necessity for the smaller separate grant previously provided, apart from which Ireland was on terms of absolute equality with England and Scotland. The special grant in aid which had been given to Ireland for a considerable period, the Treasury decided should come to an end.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked if that meant that the £3,500 known as the equivalent grant was merged thereafter in the £55,000?

*MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he had pointed out that the sum of £3,500 had been paid up to that time out of the grant voted annually by the House. They now came to the point when in 1901 the Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded that to put the two countries in a position of entire equality, the special aid grant should cease. Representations were made by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in consequence of these representations the Treasury undertook that the old grant of £3,500 should be continued for three years more, on the ground that there had been some misunderstanding; that the new Department should not be placed in any disadvantageous position, and that in the interval of three years they should have time to make arrangements to provide out of their endowment for the future of technical instruction in Ireland. He must say that he could not see that the Treasury were liable to the accusation of having acted unjustly to Ireland. They had granted everything to Ireland which had been granted to England. He did not wish to labour the point, but having considered the matter deliberately and dispassionately, he did not think that Ireland had fared badly; in fact, it had done rather well. The special grant would be continued to the 31st March, 1905, on the distinct understanding that, after that date, it would be withdrawn from Ireland as it had already been withdrawn from England and Scotland. Speaking on behalf of the Government, they fully recognised the importance of technical education to Ireland, and he thought that their past history showed that they had treated Ireland exceptionally well, and that they had got nothing to look back upon as discreditable in these transactions. He was strongly of opinion that they had acted in the right, and had in no degree whatever merited the Resolution that had been proposed.

MR. SHEEHY said he wished the Financial Secretary would explain what the Treasury proposed to do with the £58,629 which was voted by this House for Irish technical education, and never spent in Ireland.

*MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he believed that that sum was at the disposal of the Department of Education in Ireland, which was responsible for it. If it could be shown that the regulations under which those sums of money were administered, prevented the money from going to the objects or which it was required, the matter would receive the careful consideration of the Treasury.

*SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.) said that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury could hardly think that the Irish Members would be satisfied with the answer he had given. The hon. Gentleman had discharged his duty with great ability, and his speech showed that he had devoted considerable attention to the question. He gathered from that speech, however, and the materials supplied to the hon. Gentleman by the Treasury officials, that the Treasury imagined nobody understood this question in Ireland. Those of them who had made a study of this question for years past must have been surprised at the figures which the hon. Member had put before the House. The Financial Secretary had told them that all that Ireland was allowed by the Act of 1899 was a sum of £3,500. That was a most astounding statement. Ever since the year 1889 a large sum had been put down on the Estimates and voted by the House for the purposes of technical education in Ireland. It was a most extraordinary thing that in 1890 the amount voted for technical education was nearly £14,000, but only £8,000 had been spent; and yet they were told that all the money ever asked for, or spent in Ireland on technical education was £3,500! He thought the speech of the Financial Secretary showed what the policy of the Treasury was as to the Acts of 1889 and 1899. That policy, he contended, was an endeavour to get out of the obligations placed upon the Treasury, by Parliament, in return for payments made by Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer. The history of technical education in Ireland was rather complicated. It began with the Act of 1889, under which a certain amount was allotted to Ireland for technical education, which sum was to correspond with a rate of one penny in the £, which would be levied by the Irish local authorities. That was in return for the whiskey duty which was paid by Ireland. If that rate had been struck the amount available for technical education in Ireland would have been £63,000 a year. As a matter of fact that amount had not been spent, for the simple reason that the regulations would not work except to a very limited extent. Each year a certain sum was put on to the Estimates to be devoted to technical education in Ireland under the Science and Art Department, but in no year was the sum voted, which varied in amount, spent in Ireland. What happened then? This Irish money which had been voted by the House for technical education purposes in Ireland was not spent in Ireland, but on technical education in England, the total amount so appropriated from 1889 to 1899 being probably not far short of £100,000. When attention was drawn to this matter, separate accounts were no longer kept and they were not able to discover how much money was voted for technical education in Ireland. Then came the Act of 1899, under which £55,000 was granted to Ireland for technical education. That was not English money, but Irish money from Irish sources; it was part of the revenue of the Irish Departments derived from the Irish Surplus Fund, from Ireland's share of the probate duties, from the extinction of Irish judgeships, and from economies in Irish administration. There was nothing in the Act of 1899 which implied that the original equivalent grant was to be waived or done away with. Unless the

Treasury could prove that an Act of Parliament had taken away that grant, they had a right to insist upon the payment of the £100,000 of the Irish money spent in England, of £63,000 a year which was the equivalent of the penny rate, and this further sum of £55,000 provided under the Act of 1899. When the English Education Act of 1892 was in Committee objection was taken that that Act would prevent Ireland from getting an equivalent grant for technical education, but this was specially met in that Act.

When the Act of 1899 was passed the Irish people set to work in earnest to start technical education. They struck a rate and did everything in their power to earn the money voted by Parliament. They were encouraged by the Irish Agricultural Department, and told that they would get a penny in the £ from them and a penny under the Act of 1889—that the two together would be equivalent to something like £118,000 a year. Now, the Treasury wished to put Ireland off with £3,500 a year! They were told that they would get £7,000 instead of this £355,000. He wanted to know whether that sum had been paid, for he had a suspicion that it had not been paid, and he hoped the representative of the Government would give them some information on this point. They insisted that this £55,000 should be given to them in addition to the £63,000 which was Irish money. They would not under any circumstances consent to charge the Irish development grant with any future acts of generosity which the Treasury might contemplate with regard to Ireland. That money had been granted for a specific purpose and they insisted upon that purpose being fulfilled.

He wished to say a word on the question of technical instruction buildings in Ireland, and this was a question to which he invited the special attention of the Treasury Bench. The local technical instruction committees had done their best to provide accommodation for the technical schools. It was all very well when they understood they were to get twopence for every penny they raised under this Act, but now they were only to get £3,500, and a very great difficulty had arisen upon this question of providing accommodation. It was the same all over the country, for the technical committees had not money enough to provide proper school accommodation, and they were at their wits end to know how to carry on their work. If they built the necessary schools all their money would go and they would have no funds left to teach their pupils. This question was a very serious one and, he hoped it would be carefully considered. At the present time they were not allowed to use any part of their technical rate to pay interest on any money borrowed for technical school buildings. He wished to remind the Government that all over Ireland there were model schools, and generally they were not of much public utility, and he thought the Treasury could very easily utilise those schools for the purposes of technical education. He thought that would put those schools to a much more useful purpose without any hardship to anybody, and there would be an easing of the situation. The equivalent of the Irish money spent in England for technical education ought to form a nucleus for providing a building fund for Irish technical schools. Technical education was what the masses of the people in Ireland needed in order to fit them for obtaining their livelihood, and in view of the importance of this question he hoped the Treasury would reconsider their position, and give them a more satisfactory answer to the points which had been raised.

Sir JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.) thought the Government was wise in endeavouring to foster the technical instruction which was necessary to equip the youth of Ireland for the keen competition which was now going on. There was at present a difficulty as to means. They were allowed to strike a rate of a penny in the pound, or £4,500 a year, but this would be more than absorbed in interest on the buildings. This caused a very serious difficulty. The only fund they had at their disposal was their share of the £55,000, and that amounted to £9,000 or £10,000 a year. This money, however, was absorbed in equipping the schools with first-class teachers and appliances, without which they could never hope to grapple with the question, and become up-to-date in regard to their education. The hon. Member who had just sat down spoke of a sum of £63,000, but he did not think that amount came into the question at all until every constituency in Ireland had adopted the Act.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: They have all done it now.

SIR JAMES HASLETT said that not a tithe of them had adopted it, and not a tithe of them had provided a penny in the pound. There was only a small proportion of the governing bodies in Ireland that had made this rate in order to grapple with education. Therefore they had no right to speak of this £63,000. The penny in the pound ought to have its equivalent. Education was not of so much value when it was given for nothing, and the community that taxed itself for education was more likely to be careful in the distribution of the money, and in seeing that they got proper value for it. His hon. friend had said that he proposed putting down next year the sum of £3,500, but he had limited it to one year, and by so doing he had taken the grace out of the act. He urged the hon. Member to realise that if Ireland was to be brought up-to-date in educational matters there was a little debt owing to her. He did not blame the Treasury entirely, for the people of Ireland were only just waking up to the importance of this question and realising its value. If in the past they had taxed themselves they would have received a larger amount. In Belfast they received small doles from South Kensington, but, now they had come to face the question, he did not think £55,000 a year would be sufficient to bring them up-to-date. He implored the Treasury to deal generously with a people who were quick in learning, and who, if they received this instruction, were thoroughly capable of competing with any people in the world. He implored the representatives of the Treasury to consider this question, and not return an unsympathetic answer. He hoped the sympathy of the Government would take a concrete form, and come down to them decently in pounds, shillings, and pence.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.) said the Government had tried to prove by fictitious figures that these grants had been more of a gain to Ireland than a loss. The instant the people of Ireland woke up and put their House in order in Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Dublin, and other centres, which were striking a full grant, they were not granted the equivalent from South Kensington, and the Treasury set themselves to work to cut down the grant. In one year in Scotland they received £78,000, whereas Ireland only got £4,000, although the people of Ireland had contributed sufficient money to entitle them to five times that amount. At the present time the administration of the education funds made it impossible for them to earn the money. Some time ago they sent to Ireland some Scotchmen as instructors, and they pointed out to the educational authorities in Ireland how in Scotland they were earning so much money. Ireland adopted the same methods, but the Government stopped their grants. He believed that if Ireland had gone on in the old groove the equivalent grant would never have been taken from them. Ireland had been robbed altogether of nearly £1,000,000 in this way, and he believed that this money, which had been deliberately taken from them, had been devoted to English purposes, and they would not tell them where the money had gone to. The hon. Member opposite had stated that they were not allowed to use this money for building purposes, but that was erroneous, for they were allowed to use it for buildings, but if they did use it in that way they would lose what they would otherwise receive from the equivalent grant. They were obliged to use this money for the equipment of their schools, and after this had been done they had no means to supply the wants of the students properly in regard to housing them. In Cork City they had equipped the schools as efficiently as the needs of the community required, and they had contributed all the money they could under the Act. But if this equivalent grant was taken away the masters and teachers employed there would have to be dismissed, and one of the most important schools there—the School of Music—would have to be closed. He believed that the amount of money they would lose by this Treasury trick would be about £700 a year. They had been deprived of many advantages whilst the English community had been receiving this money. Just when the benefits of this education were coming to them, that was the moment chosen by the Treasury to refuse these grants. He believed many of the schools in Ireland would have to be closed if the Treasury persisted in taking this course. He wished to inform the Government that they had not heard the last of this question. Money had been squandered lavishly on English technical instruction, and the Treasury were now attempting to embarrass their advance in this direction in Ireland. In Germany they spent four times the amount of money that England spent upon technical education. If the Government were going to spend all this money equipping England alone, and if they left Ireland without an equivalent, he assured them that they had not heard the last of this question. If they embarrassed Ireland in regard to technical instruction, Irish representatives would embarrass the Government in other ways.

Mr. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said that before they were prepared to adopt technical education a certain amount of money was voted by Parliament, and he should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to tell them what had become of that money. Was it still available? Independently of whether they were entitled to that money or not, he did not think it was a wise policy for the Government to stint technical education in Ireland. Recently there had been an awakening in Ireland upon this question. Meetings had been held in Dublin on the subject, and if encouragement was given to the Irish people to enter more into industrial pursuits, they would do so, and the first encouragement was to give them that technical education which would enable them to undertake occupations of any sort. The manufacturing portion of Ireland seemed to be centred in the eastern portion of Ulster, but he wished to remind them that they could purchase coal as cheaply in Cork as in Ulster. If the people there had never been accustomed to mechanical work there was no better way of supplying this deficiency than by giving them technical instruction. Whatever the grants were they were entitled to have them. He could not say whether they were getting their fair share or not, but in any case it would be a wise thing for the Government to stretch a point and give them sufficient to enable Ireland to keep on those schools which had been started, and which otherwise they would be obliged to shut down.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): I do not think I can add very much to what has been said as to the history of this subject by my hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. I should like to say that I share with my hon. friends from Ireland who have spoken on this subject, the desire to see technical instruction promoted and successfully carried on in Ireland. I quite agree with what my hon. friend has said, that there is no greater need at the present moment than that for technical instruction, and that it will be something in the nature of a disaster if that technical instruction cannot be given, or if its progress is checked and thwarted by any action of ours. But the Motion which has been put upon the Paper is a Motion of censure on the Treasury in connection with what the mover calls—

> "The action of the Treasury in withholding the Irish equivalent grant for technical education is a violation of the intention of Parliament and a gross injustice to Ireland."

We have heard to-night some very interesting, and, I admit, very temperately put, speeches from both sides of the House, but I think that, at the root of those speeches, there has been the idea that the Treasury are dealing unfairly with Ireland, and withholding from Ireland the equivalent of something which is available in England, Scotland, and in Wales. But that is not the case, and I propose to show the House that it is not so. In so doing I shall be obliged to recapitulate what has already been said to the House by my hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and I may say I do not think his arguments have received sufficient attention.

These technical instruction grants had their origin in the Technical Instruction Act of 1889, and for the first time, in the year 1891–1892, a sum was put upon the Votes for the promotion of technical instruction under those Acts. In Ireland the full equivalent was given, but the amount was divided, part of it going to the Board of National Education in order to place the teachers' fund in a sound financial position, and the remainder was given to the Board of Intermediate Education. From that time when this money, commonly known as the "whiskey money," was made available, the English, Welsh, and other grants made in the United Kingdom outside Ireland, stopped, but the grant to Ireland continued. It started at £500 a year and gradually rose until in 1897–98 it reached £3,500 a year, and it has continued at that figure, with a slight decrease of about £100, ever since. This grant had no equivalent either in England, Scotland, or Wales. It was continued, because, in the first instance, the Irish equivalent to the English grant was appropriated to these other purposes. In the year 1899, the new Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction was established in Ireland, and to that Department was given, besides an endowment from other Irish funds, the sum of £78,000 out of the whiskey money. The teachers' pension fund having been put into a solvent condition, the money was no longer required for that purpose, and it was made available in Ireland, as it was in this country, for the purposes of technical instruction, the sum being £55,000. My object is to show to the House that Ireland has had its equivalent for every grant made to technical education in this country; that it not only has had its equivalent, but that ever since 1891–92 it has had a sum allotted to it which will continue, under a decision of my hon. friend the Member for Croydon when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, up to the close of the next financial year. Therefore, in addition to the full equivalent for anything given for England or Wales, it has had this additional sum which was peculiar to Ireland.

Then we come to the English Education Act. Naturally a very considerably increased grant was made from the Exchequer to the local authorities in aid of the new additional expenses of education in this country. But Ireland had its full equivalent. Ireland had £185,000 as an equivalent grant, and it is that grant which forms the development fund to which allusion had been made. In appropriating this Irish grant by Act of Parliament for Irish purposes, the first purpose provided for was education, and it was intended that out of this fund made available for Ireland as the equivalent of what was allotted to England, Irish educational needs should be met in the form in which those needs arose. In the speech made by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary to which the hon. and learned Member for Waterford alluded, my right hon. friend was arguing against the spending of this money at that moment because he contended that Ireland was not ready for it, and ought not to be forced to spend the money on exactly the same purposes as it was devoted to in England, when the needs of Ireland were not the same. The principle that Ireland should have its equivalent was accepted by the Treasury and by my predecessor, and its equivalent was given in the form of the development grant, which is at the disposal of the Irish Government for Irish purposes, subject to appropriation in this House in the annual Estimates. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford quoted a sentence from the speech of my right hon. friend in which he spoke of the much larger sum which had been obtained in England and which had been expended in this country on technical education from 1892 to 1900 than had been spent in Ireland. I have shown the House that Ireland had its equivalent, and if it was not spent on technical education that was because, in the needs of Ireland at that time, the House chose otherwise to direct. It was not fair to quote what my right hon. friend said and to suggest that he had intimated to the House that Ireland had had no equivalent, because the Chief Secretary pointed out in the very next sentence that they had had their equivalent, though he did not think it had all been spent to the best advantage. I am not entitled to dispute the judgment of my right hon. friend, but I know the Chief Secretary is anxious to communicate with Irish Members on both sides of the House in order to secure that the funds available for Irish purposes shall be spent to the best advantage for Ireland, and he desires to obtain, if he can, some consensus of opinion amongst Irishmen of all shades of political opinion as to how the educational development of Ireland can best be carried out.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Why is the Chief Secretary not here to speak for himself?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think that is a needless interruption. This is a question which directly affects the Treasury, and those who represent the Treasury are here to answer. When hon. Members desire it they can move a vote of censure on the Chief Secretary, an expedient which is not altogether unknown, and then my right hon. friend will be here to answer it. It is not the practice of the House to demand the presence of all Ministers referred to in the course of a debate, and it is impossible for a Minister to always be present when questions arise touching his Department.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: The Minister responsible for the Government of Ireland ought to be here on every important Irish debate.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is not the practice of the House, nor is it possible for Ministers to be present in the House so frequently as hon. Members opposite appear to think. I was speaking of the equivalent grant which Ireland had obtained for the grant given to England under the recently passed Education Act. My right hon. friend, in the same speech to which allusion has already been made, said a little further on—

> "This money would be wasted if Ireland were bound to spend forthwith what she could on education, and leave the balance; accordingly he put it into the development grant. So that whilst this grant of £185,000 is to be an indemnity to the Treasury against future demands on the score of education, and a promise to Ireland that such demands should be met, the whole of it now cannot be profitably spent and in my opinion some part of it should be devoted to the development of evening continuation schools and to the promotion of technical instruction, and Ireland ought not to have to choose between the alternative of wasting or losing the money."

Ireland was not invited to choose between those alternatives, but the money was secured to her and is available now for the Board of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, who can promote technical instruction in Ireland if they wish; if that is the purpose for which Irish opinion generally desires those funds to be devoted. Two suggestions were made by the hon. Member for Wexford, as to which, I am afraid, I am not able to speak positively at this moment. He said that funds are available from the rates for technical instruction, but they are not available for paying interest on loans to provide suitable buildings for technical instruction, and that it would be a relief to the situation and facilitate the progress of technical instruction if those funds could be made available for that purpose.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To some extent.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I will communicate with my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary on that point and see what can be done. The hon. Member opposite has made a further suggestion about model schools, and he has asked whether they can be made available for the carrying on of technical instruction. That point also I will look into, without further information I cannot make any definite promise, but I hope that it may be possible.

Sir JAMES HASLETT said that the interpretation placed upon the Act limited the spending of the money entirely to educational purposes. They had in Ireland made an effort to use a portion of the grant for the purpose of paying interest in the way suggested, but it had been declared to be a contravention of the Act.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is the point into which I said I would look. If the Act prevents it, mere consent on my part would not make that legal which is now illegal, and it would be a question of coming to Parliament for further powers, assuming that the Irish Government agree that the suggestion is a good one in itself. From the point of view of the Irish Government I shall have an opportunity of examining those proposals, and I do not think that my hon. friend and the hon. Baronet opposite will desire to press me further on these matters at this moment. With regard to the statement that England has received something for which Ireland has not received an equivalent I can only meet that assertion with a direct negative. Ireland has received its equivalent for every grant given to England, and it has not only done so, but in the course of the thirteen or fourteen years which have elapsed since the special grant was withdrawn from England, Scotland, and Wales, and during which it has been continued in Ireland, that country will have received a sum of between £25,000 and £30,000 for which Great Britain has received no equivalent. Hon. Members opposite have tried to lay down that it is a system of sound finance that whenever a grant is made to England for any purpose, an equivalent should be made to Ireland. They desire that this principle should be applied to every new grant made for an English purpose, whether that purpose exists in Ireland or not, or whether, there is any equivalent in Ireland to which it can be applied. If that principle be accepted then we must carry it out consistently, and when there is no equivalent in England they must not expect anything in Ireland. For my part I think that the principle adopted by the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the House in the allocation of money to Ireland—namely, that it should be applied to the purposes chiefly required there, and not necessarily to the same purposes as in England, is a sound principle. I should be glad to see the funds at the disposal of the Irish Government for these purposes increased by the savings which my right hon. friend hopes to effect in the cost of Irish administration. It is not proposed, for example, to fill up the vacant judgeship, and the money thus saved will go to the funds available for general purposes, including technical education. If my right hon. friend is able to effect any further savings in the judiciary I have already agreed with him that, as far as the Treasury is concerned, we will raise no objection to throwing such savings into the development grant, and making them available for the same purpose. I hope I have said enough to show to my hon. friends that I am not insensible to the claims they raise for technical instruction in Ireland, for I recognise its great importance, and I think it would be a great misfortune if its development were checked. I think by what I have said, that I have indicated not only that Ireland has had her full equivalent for everything given to England and Scotland but that there are funds available for this purpose which have been employed in Ireland only.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 80; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 17.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Ellice, Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.

M'Kean, John
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard (Claverhouse
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E.(Notts.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 25th February, 1904.

NEW PEER.

William Henry Armstrong Fitzpatrick Watson-Armstrong, Esquire, having been created Baron Armstrong of Bamburgh and Cragside, in the county of Northumberland, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Lord Tennyson took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Newcastle and Gateshead Water [H.L.]; North Wales Electric Power [H.L.]; Ticehurst and District Water and Gas [H.L.].

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Clyde Navigation (Works); Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Docks). The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Standing Orders Committee. Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Rotherham Corporation Bill (Petition for Bill) ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill, on condition that the consent of the Local Authority to the construction of Tramway No. 4 be proved before the Committee on the Bill, and the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 5 and 6 to be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill (Petition for Bill), the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 6, 8, 8A, 8B, and 8C be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London United Tramways Bill (Petition for Bill) ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 3, 4, 5, and 5A be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and Bill allowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to.

York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Order made on Friday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill; Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. To be read 3ª to-morrow.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form a Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.—

D. Bedford (chairman),
E. Carnwath,
E. Harrowby,
E. Verulam,
V. Colville of Culross;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday the 8th of March next at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Gosport Water Bill [H.L.]; Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.:—

E. Stamford,	L. Carew,
E. Crewe (chairman),	L. Romilly,
	L. Hylton;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday the 8th of March next at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (GENERAL).

Papers relating to the proposed adoption of a metric system of weights and measures for use within the Empire.

TRADE REPORTS.

I. Annual Series; No. 3122. Trade of Alexandria for the year 1902.

II. Miscellaneous Series; No. 602. Germany: The Textile Technical Schools and the Development of the Textile Industries.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

1. Reports on manuscripts in various collections: Vol. III. The manuscripts of T. B. Clarke-Thornhill, Sir T. Barrett-Lennard, Bart., Pelham R. Papillon, W. Cleverley Alexander.

2. Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P., preserved at Kilkenny Castle: New Series. Vol. III.

ARMY (ESTIMATES).

Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates for 1904–1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie upon the Table.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairmen of the Standing Committee.

E. Spencer.	L. Balfour.
E. Morley.	L. Elgin.
E. Camperdown.	(*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)
V. Cross.	L. Burghclere.

Read, and ordered to lie upon the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Viscount Cross Chairman of the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for the better prevention of corruption; was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 15.)

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 16.)

NEWCASTLE CHAPTER (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order). Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next.

THE WAR AND THE BRITISH NAVY.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty a Question of which I have given him private notice. It is one of great moment to this country, and the points contained in it are now creating considerable interest everywhere. I wish to know whether the noble Earl can give any information as to the following statements which have been made in the Press and elsewhere as to the action of this country in matters affecting the Russo-Japanese war, and which is interpreted as evidence that this country has broken the letter or the spirit of the law of neutrality—(1) in allowing the Argentine cruisers bought by Japan to leave Genoa under the Red Ensign; (2) in supplying naval officers to command these vessels; (3) in escorting these cruisers in the Mediterranean by His Majesty's ships; (4) in not allowing certain Russian destoyers to dock at Malta; and (5) in allowing the Japanese to use Wei-hai-Wei as a base for an attack on Port Arthur.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): My Lords, I recognise the gravity of the questions put to me by my noble friend. I am absolutely at a loss to conjecture from what source these stories can have emanated. There is, I fear, some influence at work which is endeavouring to misrepresent the attitude of this country and to show that the Navy is not observing that strict neutrality which is incumbent upon it. I will take each of the points in turn mentioned by the noble Earl. It has been stated that the two cruisers bought by the Japanese Government from the Argentine Government, and which were built at Genoa, were allowed to leave that port under the British flag. My Lords, there is not a word of truth in that statement. An application was made to the Consul that the ships should be allowed to fly the British flag. The request was immediately refused, and they never flew that flag for one second.

Again, it has been stated that the Admiralty supplied two naval officers as captains of these cruisers. Again there is not a word of truth in that statement. Two gentlemen who had been officers in the Navy were selected by the Japanese Government to command these cruisers. They were gentlemen over whom the Admiralty had no sort of control whatever, and they drew neither pay nor pension from the Government. They had, however, some time ago voluntarily placed themselves on what is known as the emergency list of ex-officers who are available for service in time of war. The moment the Admiralty learnt that these officers, over whom they had no control, but who were on this emergency list, had undertaken to command these cruisers, the Board decided to strike them off the emergency list; and this was done before any kind of complaint was made, before the facts had become public, and simply because the Board of Admiralty thought it the wiser course to do that which would leave no room for misrepresentation. The third statement that has been made is that these cruisers, after leaving Genoa, were escorted through the Mediterranean by His Majesty's ships. There is no foundation of any sort or kind for that statement. I do not know what colourable accident may have given rise to it. I do not believe myself, and I have no knowledge, that they were even sighted by any of His Majesty's ships.

It has also been stated that we acted in a discourteous and unusual manner in respect to the docking of certain Russian destroyers at Malta. What are the facts of the case? Some considerable time ago, before affairs between Japan and Russia had arrived at a critical stage, application was made on behalf of the Russian Government to the Board of Admiralty that they would allow a certain number of Russian destroyers—five or six—to be docked at Malta. That request was granted, as usual, with pleasure. When those destroyers went to Malta affairs between Japan and Russia had become critical, and it behoved us to consider what would be the position according to international law if war broke out while these destroyers were still at Malta. As your Lordships will remember, the law in the matter is this—that a foreign ship-of-war must leave within twenty-four hours a neutral port or be detained at that port during the duration of the war. We thought it was only fair to the officer commanding these Russian destroyers that he should be reminded of this fact, or otherwise, if war broke out, he might find himself in the position that he could not leave within the twenty-four hours, and that the ships would have to remain there during the whole of the war. We therefore thought it right to remind him of the state of international law. So that your Lordships will understand that the only inducement we had in giving him this reminder was that we should be quite clear of any future suggestion that we had not given a warning which we might have given. Unfortunately, there was a misunderstanding, for which I cannot account. The Russian Consul understood that the destroyers were directed to leave Malta within twenty-four hours, not that they were warned that if war broke out they would have to leave. That has been explained to the Russian Government as a very regrettable misunderstanding, arising, as your Lordships can see, from our desire to be sure that the Russian officer understood the position. I might say, in this connection, that nothing more contrary to the ordinary practice of our Navy than to be inhospitable to the ships of other navies can be conceived. I do not think that foreigners entirely realise the extent to which we extend that hospitality, and extend it gladly. I have had the cases looked up; and I find that within the twelve months ended 31st January of this year, in no fewer than seventy-nine separate cases we have had the opportunity of offering hospitality to Russian ships of war in various ports of our own all over the world. I only mention that to show what, I think, is too little remembered sometimes upon the Continent—namely, the spirit in which we approach this question.

Lastly, it has been stated, and I fear very widely believed, that the attack made upon the Russian fleet at Port Arthur was made by the Japanese fleet from Wei-hai-Wei as a base. My Lords, that is a most wicked falsehood. I can use no language less strong; and the responsibility is indeed great with the source from which such a story emanated. The fact is that not a single Japanese ship has been at Wei-hai-Wei since August last; and at the very moment when this story was being most diligently circulated with the idea of inflaming Russian opinion against this country—at that very moment, I am glad to say, H.M.S. "Talbot" at Chemulpo was engaged in giving up the whole of its accommodation and hospitality to the sailors of the Russian ships which suffered in the recent engagement, for which the Russian Government has thanked us, and in respect to which the late Russian Consul in Korea has testified to the warmth and sympathy with which the Russian sailors were received by the English, French, and Italian cruisers. I need hardly say that the "Talbot" would have most gladly done the same for the Japanese in a similar case, because the attitude of the British Navy towards both the Russian and Japanese navies is one of admiration and respect, and the whole object in view is to fulfil the spirit as well as the letter of the obligations of strict neutrality.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I am quite sure that the statement of the noble Earl will be received with satisfaction. There is only one point as to which there is some reason for hesitation and regret, and that is the communication made to the Russian Consul at Malta. Will he tell us by whom it was made and whether it was in writing or verbally?

* THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I should like to refresh my memory exactly, and if I have to correct myself later I hope the noble Earl will allow me to do so. I believe the facts are these. The Governor of Malta requested the Naval Commander-in-Chief to make a communication to the captain in command of the Russian destroyers. The captain in command could not be found, and the Russian Consul came to see the Naval Commander-in-Chief. The explanation was verbal, and the misunderstanding arose, I think, from the fact that the communication was verbal and not in writing.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE: My Lords, both of the Bills which I have charge of to-night are old friends here, and I believe they are both unopposed. The attitude of the President of the Local Government Board towards this Bill is actively friendly. Both Bills passed through your Lordships' House in 1901; in 1902 they were withdrawn because there was a Government Bill in the other House which it was thought would make them unnecessary; and in 1903 they passed through the House of Lords but failed to get through the other House. All that the Bill, the Second Reading of which I am now moving, does is to enable county councils, who are at present the sole authorities for dividing electoral divisions in their counties into polling districts for the purpose of county council elections, to alter the polling districts as occasion may require. At present it appears that, once the arrangement is made for a polling district, on the advice of Sir Robert Finlay and Sir Edward Clarke it is impossible to make any change. This has led to considerable difficulties from time to time. I do not know that I need cite the several advantages which would result from the passing of the Bill, but, speaking generally, circumstances, such as a change in the character of a locality, often make it desirable that alterations should be able to be made, and that districts should be co-terminous for both county council and Parliamentary elections.

On Question, Bill read 2^a (according to Order) and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

***LORD RIBBLESDALE**: My Lords, the object of this Bill is to remedy the present anomaly throughout England whereby the county councils are the authority for dividing Parliamentary boroughs into polling districts for Parliamentary elections where a borough is situated in more than one petty sessional division, but the Justices in petty sessions are the authority where the borough is situated wholly in their petty sessional division. This is an anomaly which has crept in under various Acts of Parliament. At present Parliamentary electoral divisions, council electoral divisions, and guardian wards in London are all practically co-terminous, but the authorities for dividing these divisions differ in each respect; and it is desirable that the council, which is the authority for dividing the council electoral divisions and also the Parliamentary electoral divisions in the main, should be made the sole authority for dealing with the whole. The Parliamentary and council voting lists are made out together, and it would avoid confusion if they were divided in the same way, and an elector would always vote at the same place at each election. This Bill also has, I believe, the support of the Government, and is quite unopposed.

On Question, Bill read 2^a (according to order) and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

CROWN AGENTS.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH, who had given notice "To ask His Majesty's Government whether Crown Agents for the Colonies receive fixed salaries for their services in connection with the Colonies and Protectorates they represent; (2) what those salaries are; (3) whether the Crown Agents are permitted to levy a percentage on expenditure or on any operation undertaken by them as Crown Agents; (4) what is the amount of this percentage; (5) are annual returns made by the Crown Agents to the Colonial Office showing exactly what sums they have received by the levying of this percentage; (6) is it not the case that in addition to the aforesaid percentage, and to any salary that may be paid out of the Imperial Exchequer, the Crown Agents receive additional salaries or allowances from all or any of the Colonies or Protectorates for which they act," said: My Lords, before I put this Question to the Government I desire to preface it with a few remarks as to what has happened since I placed the Question on the Paper. I put the Question down a fortnight or more ago, and since then I have received a very large number of private communications from responsible persons who have had experience in this matter. Although it would not be proper for one to disclose private communication, there certainly does appear to be a very general and widespread complaint as to the manner in which the Crown Agents have performed some of their duties, or, rather, the manner in which the Office has performed them. I have been told, not by people who do not know, but by those who speak with authority, but who do not impute any charge of peculation, that there does obtain the very bad practice of giving Crown Agents commissions on the expenditure which has passed through their hands and through their Office.

Very little appears in the public papers respecting the work or the duties of the Crown Agents, but as long ago as 1881 the matter did excite some interest and Sir Penrose Julyan wrote an official memorandum explaining the functions of the Crown Agents. In 1858 Lord Stanley had reconstructed the Crown Agents' Office, but Sir Penrose

Julyan, writing in 1878, thus describes the functions of the Crown Agents—

> "Railway undertakings of considerable magnitude are also carried out by the Crown Agents. From time to time they are called upon to find responsible contractors for the construction of railways in distant Colonies; on other occasions they have to negotiate for the purchase of railways already in existence, which the Colonial Government may find it desirable to acquire. In both cases all the requisites for keeping these lines of railway in good order are supplied by them. At the present moment—(he is, of course, speaking of nearly thirty years ago)—about 1,000 miles of railway are being provided by the Crown Agents with engines, rolling-stock, permanent way materials, workshop machinery, coal, and everything else necessary for their equipment and maintenance. In addition to these commodities, iron structures of all kinds, such as bridges and market-houses and other works, are carried out through the Office of the Crown Agents."

I merely quote that to show that the expenditure which passes through the hands of the Crown Agents is a very large one. The Crown Agents undertook the building of the Ashanti Railway. The estimated cost of that railway was £8,000 a mile, but the actual cost was £13,000 a mile. The distance of the railway is, for practical purposes, about 100 miles, and the difference between the estimate and the cost approximates to £500,000. Mr. Pauling, a well-known South African contractor, has built railways in tropical portions of Portuguese South East Africa where the climatic and physical conditions are of the same character as obtained in the case of the Ashanti Railway — he built the railway from Beira to Mashonaland, as well as railways in Rhodesia, and the average cost of the railways he constructed has been £5,000 per mile. Not only has this Ashanti railway been expensively constructed, but I am informed by those who are thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of the case that it is badly constructed, and that it can barely keep up a speed of ten miles an hour. I should like to quote an extract from a letter addressed by Mr. Kenrick Murray, the Secretary of the West African Section of the London Chamber of Commerce, to the Colonial Secretary, dated 19th January last, and which will be found in the *African Review* of the 6th inst. Now, what

The Earl of Portsmouth.

does Mr. Kenrick Murray say in regard to this matter? He says—

> "The members of the West African section of this chamber have had under their consideration Mr. Antrobus's letter of 6th November relative to the rates for the carriage of goods on the Gold Coast Government Railway, and are extremely disappointed that you have not seen your way to reconsider the scale of charges. They are at a loss to understand how it can be contended that the rates are unlikely to hinder the development of the mines, when in the chamber's letter of 24th July last, the estimated cost of transporting a 50-stamp mill for a distance of 125 miles on the railway, was shown to be equivalent to from 40 to 60 per cent. of the invoice price f.o.b. London. Not only are the rates exorbitant, but apparently the local manager has power to issue schedules of charges which differ from those published by your office.'

and he goes on to say, speaking of this particular railway—

> "The section is aware that the cost of the railway has very far exceeded the original estimate, and in their opinion, had the work been put to tender and given to a contractor it would have cost very much less, been built more quickly, and generally have given greater satisfaction."

It is not my wish, nor is it the desire of anyone in this House, to introduce into this question any feeling of Party animus. It is obvious that the Office of the Crown Agents is a necessary one. It is also obvious that the Crown Agents ought to be paid fair salaries so as to get the best men and men of integrity. But it is also of the greatest importance that the work which is carried on through this office should be efficiently done.

I do not think that sufficient weight is given, from time to time, to the fact that we are obliged by our Imperial position to be expending these large sums of money in the development of our colonial Empire. But if this expenditure is so badly and extravagantly administered and we have to impose heavy rates, naturally the result is that industrial development is most seriously checked. I have heard it said, but I do not know how far it is true, that the development of Africa is seriously affected by a shipping trust, by high railway rates, and by other commercial facts which ought not to exist, but which do have the result of enormously increasing the cost of living to the white man, and of seriously interfering with industrial development. I think this question of the Ashanti Railway is one which, in itself, would justify an independent inquiry into the Crown Agents' Office. I should also like to ask the noble Duke what the Colonial Office has done with regard to the serious complaints that were made to it by Sir William McGregor in 1903? Sir William McGregor is the Governor of the Colony of Lagos, and he made very serious complaints to the Colonial Office as to the inefficiency in the construction of the railway, managed by the Office of the Crown Agents, which was made in the interior of Lagos near the delta of the Niger. I wish it to be clearly understood that I am not desirous of making any loose, unfair, or unjustifiable charges against the Crown Agents. What I say is this, that I have been told by gentlemen of experience, and gentlemen who know what they are speaking about, that there does prevail at the present moment a most unsatisfactory system of remunerating our Crown Agents. On the other hand, we have, in the construction of the Ashanti Railway and other railways, evidence to show that, from whatever cause, the work has been extravagantly and not satisfactorily done. I do wish to press on His Majesty's Government the serious importance of this question. I am sure the noble Duke will agree that it is desirable that every penny of the taxpayers' money should be properly spent. Having regard to the very unsatisfactory facts that I have stated, and which are public property, and also to the statements that are made privately regarding the unsatisfactory way in which the Crown Agents are paid, I do hope the Colonial Office will consider most seriously whether it would not be very much to the public advantage to have an absolutely impartial inquiry into the Office of Crown Agents.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, I quite agree with the noble Earl who has just sat down that it is our desire, in supervising the Office of the Crown Agents, to secure that the British taxpayer is not paying too high a price for the commodities and implements of every sort and kind that the Crown Agents supply to our Crown Colonies. I think that the noble Earl would prefer that I should, in replying to the remarks he has addressed to your Lordships, answer more or less categorically those Questions which he has put down on the Paper, and on which he is anxious to receive information. I hope that when I have answered them, I shall have disabused his mind of the idea that the Crown Agents do not do everything in their power to carry out in the best and cheapest possible manner the different contracts for which they are responsible. As your Lordships are aware, there are three Crown Agents, and the respective salaries are £2,300, £1,450, and £1,200 a year. These are fixed salaries settled by the Secretary of State, and they cannot be altered or changed unless the Secretary of State so desires. The noble Earl asked whether the Crown Agents are permitted to levy a percentage on expenditure or on any operation undertaken by them as Crown Agents. This, I think, requires a slight explanation. The Crown Agents are allowed to levy a percentage on works undertaken by them for the Crown Colonies. The scale of charges for the different classes of business transacted by them is fixed by the Secretary of State. In commercial matters, railways, and general business, the Crown Agents are allowed to levy a uniform commission of 1 per cent. on all stores obtained through them.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Do I understand from the noble Duke that the Crown Agents are actually permitted by the Colonial Office regulations to charge a commission of 1 per cent. on the gross expenditure on any work undertaken by them? If so, then the greater the expenditure the greater the commission.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am afraid I have not explained myself clearly to the noble Earl. They are entitled to receive 1 per cent. on all stores supplied by them to the Crown Colonies; that is not the same thing as on all work carried out by them.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Then the greater the cost of the stores the greater the commission?

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: That is so, but their one desire is to supply the stores at the cheapest possible price.

EARL GREY: Would not the word "stores" include rails?

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Yes. Now, with regard to loans. On loans raised by the Crown Colonies the Crown Agents are entitled to charge ½ per cent. on the issue and on the repayment, and ¼ per cent. on the payment of interest. The noble Earl has referred to the question of railways and has alluded to the difference of price between the Ashanti Railway and the railways that have been constructed by Messrs. Pauling. I am not in a position to explain to-night why that railway has cost so much more than other African railways. I can inform the noble Earl that it has been the custom, in the case of railways constructed in the Colonies, for the Crown Agents to supply the material. They are obviously able, by their long experience, to purchase material in this country at a much cheaper rate than it could be obtained by other means. They have had dealings for many years with the best firms and are able to advise the Colonies which firms to go to; and, as they pay ready money they are able to purchase the goods supplied to the Colonies at a much cheaper rate than would otherwise be the case. I would point out to the noble Earl that the Ashanti Railway was constructed at the time when a state of war existed, and the consequent diversion of labour may have accounted for the increased expenditure. The noble Earl has asked why tenders have not been obtained for the building of this railway. The Colonial Office believe that the present method—the purchase of material in this country by the Crown Agents at what we believe to be the cheapest price possible, and the utilisation by the Colonies of the labour on the spot—is the best and most economical course of procedure. The noble Earl has asserted that the rates on the Ashanti Railway are more or less prohibitive. I would point out that before the construction of the railway the people had to pay something like £50 a ton for the conveyance of their goods to the goldfields. To-day, owing to the facilities offered by the railway, they do not pay more than £10 a ton, so that I do not think it can be complained that the construction of this railway has been in any way a hindrance to industrial prospects in that country.

Then the noble Earl asked whether annual returns were made by the Crown Agents to the Colonial Office showing exactly what sums they had received by the levying of this percentage. I can assure the noble Earl that an abstract of the total receipts of the Crown Agents is sent half-yearly to the Colonial Office. The sums received upon the different charges, including the percentage to which I have already alluded, are separately shown, and these accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. The noble Earl referred to the question of shipping trusts. I will not go into that question beyond observing that of late the freight between this country and South Africa has been at a very reasonable rate—I think I am right in saying it has not been more than 16s. a ton. I believe that is a very favourable rate, and one which few people would complain of. Whether or not the rate will remain at that figure I would not like to predict. It is possible it may be raised; but that may be due to many and various causes of which the noble Earl is perfectly aware. If there is a shipping trust which controls the rates it is obvious that they will be high; if, on the other hand, there is an outsider prepared to compete with the shipping trust the rates will fall. It will depend very much whether there are outsiders to compete, and in proportion as there are the rate will go down and in proportion as there are not the rate will go up. It is impossible for us to exercise control over that to any great degree. If combines are created we have to recognise them; if, on the other hand, there are no combines and people compete one against the other for the carrying trade to South Africa it is obvious that the public benefit.

The noble Earl was anxious to know whether, in addition to the aforesaid percentage, there was any other salary paid out of the Imperial Exchequer to the

Crown Agents. The Crown Agents themselves do not receive any further percentage. Their salaries are fixed, and are not altered except by the desire and wish of the Secretary of State. It is true that the Crown Colonies and Protectorates make contributions to the Crown Agents' Office for the general services of the agents, in return for which they attend to the payment of salaries to officers on leave or pensions or family remittances—in fact, all matters which are not covered by the general charge. These contributions from the different Colonies and Protectorates vary in amount, and depend largely upon the extent of the work required. I will give the noble Earl an instance. In the case of Lagos they only contribute £50, but the contribution of Ceylon is £250 a year. Those amounts, as I have said, vary in proportion to the work of this character which is done for the different Colonies. I would point out to the noble Earl that the Crown Agents do not receive money from the Imperial Exchequer. The receipts of the Crown Agents' Office are made up of the percentages on loans and materials, and the fixed annual payments from the Colonies for the work which is not covered by the special charge. The payments out of that fund are as follows:—The fixed salaries of the Crown Agents to which I have alluded, the salaries of the staff and minor officials, and the general cost of the maintenance of the office itself. If there is any surplus at the end of the year it is paid into a fund for the granting of pensions to Crown Agents, and the pensions are settled on a basis similar to those of all other civil servants in this country; so the noble Earl will see that the Crown Agents are not paid in any way out of the Imperial Exchequer. They are responsible to the colonial Governments, but the Secretary of State excercises a general control.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Does the noble Duke say that this commission is not paid out of the Imperial Exchequer? Who pays the commission on materials?

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am afraid I must have explained myself very badly. It is paid by the Crown Colonies themselves. The British taxpayer is not called upon to make any contribution; the expenditure comes out of the funds of the Colonies themselves. I understood the noble Earl to say, in the course of his remarks, that there had been widespread complaints with regard to the inefficient administration of the Crown Agents. The noble Earl may be better informed than I am, but I certainly cannot admit that there have been widespread complaints in this direction. Only last year the late Secreof State for the Colonies wrote round to the different Protectorates and Crown Colonies inquiring whether they had any complaints to make. It is true that in the replies there were instances in which complaints were made—the instance of Sir William McGregor at Lagos was one—but, in each case, when the matter was carefully gone into it was shown that there was not sufficient cause for the complaint. I do not think that the Colonies in the least suffer from the system under which the Crown Agents work, and it is important to the Colonies that their business should have a recognised centre in this country. I hope that the noble Earl, after considering the answers which I have given to his Questions, will not go away with the impression that the Crown Agents do not do their best to supply the Crown Colonies and Protectorates with the cheapest and best commodities and to transmit them from this country as rapidly as possible.

EARL GREY: My Lords, the information which the noble Duke has given to your Lordships that the expenses of the office of the Crown Agents is debited to the various Crown Colonies affected, I think supplies us with an additional reason for being most jealous as to the way in which that Office performs its duties. I understand that the Crown Colony is affected and not the British taxpayer if the administration of that office is lax and expensive. I wish to associate myself on this occasion with th speech of the noble Earl. The noble Earl asked one Question to which the noble Duke has given no reply, but from the tenor of his speech I do not think the House can be in any doubt as to what that reply would be. The noble Earl suggested that, considering the importance of the duties transacted by the Crown Agents' Office, it was desirable that there should be an impartial inquiry into their methods of administering the business, and, in spite of the eulogy which the noble Duke has passed upon that Office, I hope I may be able to persuade your Lordships, and even the noble Duke himself, that there are reasons why it is desirable that that inquiry should be held.

The noble Duke is satisfied that the Crown Agents are the best buyers that can be found in this country of the material required in the Crown Colonies. I venture to differ from the noble Duke. I would adduce one instance to your Lordships which is illustrative of the general case. Some years ago Sir Harry Johnston, when he was Commissioner of the British Central African Protectorate, requisitioned for a steamer for Lake Nyassa. He drew out the specification, and obtained a private tender from a firm of contractors. The office of the Crown Agents thought that in obtaining this tender Sir Harry Johnston was encroaching upon their province. They made representations to the Colonial Office that the business of supplying this steamer belonged to their Department, and they insisted on supplying the steamer themselves. Sir Harry Johnston, by acting individually, was able to obtain a tender to supply that steamer at £8,000. The steamer offered by the Crown Agents was to have cost £13,000. The noble Duke is acquainted with the character of Sir Harry Johnston. He was most indignant at his Administration being asked to spend £5,000 more than he thought necessary. He went straight to the Prime Minister, and Lord Salisbury decided that in this case there was a reason for departing from the usual custom of the Government; he took the ordering of the steamer out of the hands of the Crown Agents and handed it over to Sir Harry Johnston. The steamer was built for the £8,000; it was called "Lady Gwendolen" out of compliment to Lord Salisbury, and is now plying daily on Lake Nyassa. That is one instance which has come within my own personal knowledge which gives me the impression that the Crown Agents are not, as the noble Duke considers them, the best buyers to be found in this country. The noble Duke has referred to railway enterprise. I have had occasion to watch closely the price given for rails on the 2,000 miles of railway in Rhodesia. I have compared the price we have given with that given in Uganda, and the comparison in every case has been in favour of the price given in Rhodesia. In November, 1896, the contractors for the Rhodesian railways paid £4 5s. per ton for rails, while the Crown Agents for the Uganda Railway paid £4 12s. 6d. Again, in May, 1898, where I was able to compare the price in the same month, the contractors for the Rhodesian railways paid £4 10s. whilst the Crown Agents paid £4 17s. 6d. In every single case I find that the Crown Agents paid a higher price than that given by private firms.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Did my noble friend also satisfy himself that the quality of the rails was precisely similar, because that is just as important as the price? It may be that the rails bought, at the price the noble Earl quotes, by the contractors were not so cheap, at the price, as the rails used on the Uganda Railway.

EARL GREY: I do not think there will be any difficulty in satisfying the noble Duke on that point. I have also made myself acquainted with the facts about the Ashanti Railway, and I find that it is the most glaring instance of extravagant railway construction. It shows how closely we should watch departmentally constructed railways. It took the Crown Agents three-and-half years to build forty miles, at an average cost of £15,000 a mile. The people interested in the development of West Africa were so distressed at the slow rate of construction that they approached an outside contractor. They went to Messrs. Pauling, and this firm undertook to build the balance of the railway at £6,650 a mile. I should like to ask the noble Duke how much that railway has cost. Messrs. Pauling agreed to build 140 miles to Kumasi at that rate per mile, and that it should be finished a year ago. I should like to know how much that railway has cost per mile, and how far it is built? The Government refused the offer made by this responsible firm of contractors—who were prepared to give His Majesty's Government any guarantee they wanted, and who have built over 2,000 miles of railway in South Africa—with the melancholy result, as stated by the noble Earl, that the average cost of construction per mile amounted to £13,000.

There was an offer also to construct the Uganda Railway for £3,400 per mile in four years. It was decided, however, to construct it departmentally, and instead of being built in four years the railway was not built for eight or nine years, and at a cost of £9,500 a mile. That is another instance of what the loss has been to Uganda and the Empire by the Government attempting to do departmentally what I believe could be much better done if it had been entrusted to efficient contractors. The noble Duke has referred to freights, and has pointed out that shipping freights vary according to competition. My point is this, that the action of His Majesty's Government has not encouraged competition. It is well known that the Chartered Company—although, as my noble friend Lord Carrington said, they are only a handful of white men in a savage country, and although they only have a little traffic to play with—have been able to reduce the rates from 33s. to 16s. The result of this action was to cause the Conference rates to go down. The noble Duke stated, and I was glad to hear it, that those rates stand to-day at 16s.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I said that I believe the rate, until recently, stood at about 16s. I was speaking from memory. I stated that I could not say whether they would remain at that figure in the future.

EARL GREY: I would impress upon His Majesty's Government that every single person in South Africa is greatly interested in the way in which the shipping business is managed, and it is advisable that it should be managed in such a way as to secure the lowest possible freights. Some shipowners in Newcastle informed me the other day that the fear which the Colonial Office had of placing their freight contracts with tramp steamers—the fear that they might be penalised by the Conference lines at a future time—showed that they did not understand their business. There are a large number of tramp steamers outside the Conference, and there is no danger whatever in His Majesty's Government throwing the whole of their freight contracts open to tender in the same way that the Government of India does.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I promised the noble Earl at the end of last session that His Majesty's Government would put up an open tender to South Africa. They did so; they invited tenders for 50,000 tons, but there was no acceptable response whatever. Therefore I I think the noble Earl's objection is removed.

EARL GREY: That is another interesting point which would make an excellent subject for inquiry. I am informed that although the Colonial Office invited open tenders for 50,000 tons, a condition was imposed which nobody but those in the Conference lines could accept, for those who tendered for the 50,000 tons had to make themselves liable to the Government, should the Government wish to exercise an option, to carry an additional 100,000 tons later on; and no shipowner outside the Conference ring could possibly accept a contract of that character. I hope the noble Duke will give his best attention to that question. I hope I have said enough to justify me in expressing the hope that the Government will really seriously consider the desirability of appointing a Committee of Inquiry into the whole subject. I have looked into this question, not only in South Africa, but in other parts of the world. The same thing occurred in the Malay Peninsula, in Ceylon, and elsewhere, and the excess in the cost of works owing to their being undertaken by the Crown Agents has caused the greatest indignation. I am sorry to hear it said that in addition to their salaries the Crown Agents are paid an additional percentage on the outlay. When a Crown Agent is acting for the taxpayers of this country and for our Colonists, to remunerate him by a system which makes it to his direct pecuniary advantage that the bill should be a high one cannot possibly be right. I would prefer that they were paid a higher fixed salary, if necessary, and that this most improper form of remuneration should be abolished. I hope the noble Marquess the Leader of the House will be able to see his way to institute an inquiry into the administration of the Crown Agents' Office, which inquiry I regard as absolutely necessary in the public service.

Earl CARRINGTON: Before the noble Marquess replies, I should like to ask him if he can inform the House what has been the amount of the commission paid to Crown Agents year by year during the past five years.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Lansdowne)**: My Lords, I have no doubt that if the noble Earl will place his Question on the Paper, it will be answered by my noble friend beside me. With regard to the speech delivered by the noble Earl below the Gangway, I cannot help thinking that he has followed a course not very convenient to your Lordships, and hardly calculated to advance the cause which he has at heart. The noble Lord, in almost impassioned terms, appealed to the representatives of the Colonial Office to grant him what he calls an impartial inquiry into the manner in which the Crown Agents have performed their duties. I do not find in the notice which is on your Lordships' Paper a word about a Committee or an impartia inquiry. The noble Earl who introduced this subject placed upon the Paper a series of categorical Questions, which he had a perfect right to ask, and those Questions were answered in great detail and with much clearness by my noble friend the noble Duke. The noble Earl below the Gangway has gone into a host of details to which the notice on the Paper does not in any way point. He has asked for information with regard to the conditions under which a steamer was provided, under which more than one line of railway was constructed, and he has animadverted in unmeasured terms on the conduct of the Crown Agents in dealing with these different enterprises. We have not come here armed with information as to the affair of the steamer, or of the railway; but I am bound to say that if we are to judge of the noble Earl's case with regard to other railways, from what he has said on the subject of the Uganda Railway, I should be inclined to anticipate that a great many of his allegations will be found incapable of serious proof. The noble Earl has told us that it was within his knowledge that the Uganda Railway might have been constructed within four years, at a cost of about £3,000 per mile.

Earl GREY: I said the offer was made.

***The Marquess of LANSDOWNE**: That is a very different thing. It is perfectly true that the offer was made, and it is also perfectly true that it was not accepted. But I think the Government have some cause of complaint of the noble Earl's action with respect to the Uganda Railway. During many weeks of last session a notice in reference to the Uganda Railway stood on the Paper in the name of the noble Earl. Some of us took the trouble to inform ourselves as to the case, and were ready to come down to the House to reply upon it; but the noble Earl never brought it on; and now he springs it upon us, and supports his argument by statements which appear to me reckless. If the noble Earl will put a Question on the Paper with regard to the Uganda Railway, the Government will be prepared to meet him. The whole of the speech of the noble Earl was an indictment of the system of Crown Agents. I do not say that the system is not capable of improvement, but I ask the House to consider whether the suggested alternative is likely to work as well. There are no fewer than forty-four of these colonies and protectorates which are concerned in business of this kind. If there was not a central office in the hands of Crown Agents, all those colonies and protectorates would go into the markets simultaneously buying the same thing and bidding against each other. Of course, Crown Agents make mistakes; but I do not believe the insinuations made against them this evening are well founded; and

I regret that if it were intended to formulate an indictment against them the form of the notice which has been given did not made it clear that such an indictment was in contemplation.

Adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock, till Tomorrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 25th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London and India Docks Company Bill; London and North Western Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz.:—Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment) Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

"For conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901) Limited, for constructing tramways, and widening and altering roads, and acquiring lands, in the counties of Middlesex, Bucks, Surrey, and London; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

READING CORPORATION BILL.

Order [9th February], that the Reading Corporation Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Llandilo; Hay; Burn Cross; Batley; Hyson Green; Aberkenfig; Hanley; Eastney; St. Helens; Hackney (two); West Somerset; Cadoxton Barry; Dinas; Taunton; Hyde; Barry Dock; Penarth; Morganstown; Llantrisant; Ilford; Eccles; Rhosdn; Bermondsey; Huttoft; Orrell; Llangadfan; Bedfordshire; Stockport; Nottingham; Warminster; Newport; Canterbury; Longridge; Rillington; Overton; Clitheroe; Northamptonshire; and Shepherds Bush; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Lewisham, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P., preserved at Kilkenny Castle, New Series, Vol. III. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Report on Manuscripts in Various Collections, Vol. III. The Manuscripts of J. B. Clarke-Thornhill, esquire, Sir T. Barrett Lennard, Baronet, Pelham R. Papillon, esquire, and W. Cleverley Alexander, esquire [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 602 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICE AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Copy presented, of Estimates for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending 31st March, 1905, together with a Copy of the Memorandum by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury relating thereto [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 75.]

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Durham). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 76.]

2. Inquiry into Charities (Sunderland County Borough). Return relative thereto [ordered 9th February; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 77.]

VOLUNTEER BATTERIES (QUICK-FIRING GUNS.)

Address for "Return showing the names of the Volunteer Batteries which have been supplied with 4·7 Quick-firing Guns."—(*Colonel Pilkington.*)

SMALL DWELLINGS ACQUISITION ACT, 1899 (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "giving the names of the local authorities in Ireland that have put into operation The Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899; the number of applicants to whom money has been advanced by each such authority for the purpose of acquiring ownership of their houses under the Act; the amounts of the advance in each case; and the rate of interest charged to applicants on the loan."—(*Mr. O'Shaughnessy.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Historical Manuscripts Commission—Manuscripts of Irish Franciscans.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the representative of the Historical Manuscripts Commission has reported on the matter of the Manuscripts of the Irish Franciscans; and, if so, what is the nature of his report; and what steps will now be taken to publish the manuscripts.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The report of the inspector sent to Dublin to examine the manuscripts of the Irish Franciscans has only just been received, and the Historical Manuscripts Commissioners are now considering how they can best carry into effect his recommendations. His report states that there is a good three months work still to be done over and above the rearrangement of the papers which he considers advisable, before a satisfactory report upon the manuscripts could be placed in the printer's hands. Every effort will be made to complete the publication as soon as possible.

Consular Reports—Weights, Measures, and Values in English Terms.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will instruct the Consuls in foreign countries to be careful that the weights, measures, and values contained in their reports are rendered as nearly as possible in English terms.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Consuls have been recently reminded of their instructions in regard to this matter.

Facilities for Cotton Growing in the Tokar District.

MR. BRIGG: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will instruct the Consul at Berbera to report as speedily as possible on the adaptability of the district around Tokar for growing cotton, and the method he would suggest for inducing the inhabitants to take up its culture, and also report on the best means for its transit to England.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The question is engaging the attention of Lord Cromer. I shall be happy to confer with the hon. Member on the subject.

Inadequate Accommodation at Lerwick Post Office.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Postmaster-General if the Government are aware of the inadequacy of accommodation provided at Lerwick post office for the employees and for the public; and, if so, when the construction of a new building may be looked for.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware of the inadequacy of the accommodation provided in the present post office at Lerwick, and am taking steps to obtain a site for a new building as soon as possible.

Pension of ex-Postman P. J. Cahill.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that ex-postman Patrick J. Cahill, of Dublin, passed the Civil Service examination in September, 1871, secured his appointment to the establishment, as messenger, in London, and continued in that capacity (having in March, 1872, been transferred to Dublin) until March, 1875; that he was then allocated the duty which for about twenty years previously had been performed by an established postman; and, if so, whether, having regard to his claim on the Department, as secured by his Civil Service certificate and appointment to the establishment in September, 1871, and to the fact that he was not required to pass any further examination, he will explain the grounds on which the Department refuses to treat as pensionable his certificated service from September, 1871, to September, 1878.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Cahill was a boy messenger up till 1875, when he became an auxiliary postman. Service as boy messenger is not pensionable. The auxiliary duty which he performed from 1875 to 1878 was only part time duty and was also not pensionable. This duty had been performed from 1873 to 1875 by another auxiliary postman and not by an established postman. Previous to 1873 it had formed part of an established postman's duty, but a rearrangement was made in that year under which the established duty was split up. Although Cahill had to obtain a Civil Service certificate in 1871 for appointment as boy messenger, a further certificate became necessary and was obtained for him when he was appointed tot he establishment. It was only from the time when he began to perform a full time adult duty that his service could be reckoned for pension.

Promotion of Telegraphists to Engineer's Department.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why it is proposed to curtail the opportunities at present given to telegraphists to obtain appointments in the engineering department by recruiting the office staffs in this section from boy copyists.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The question of the manner in which the staff of the engineer's offices shall be recruited is under consideration. I am not prepared to say at present what proposals will be made.

Applications for Postmastership of Castle Douglas.

MR. BELL (Derby): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will give the date and number of the Post Office Circular in which applications were invited for the postmastership of Castle Douglas; and if he will state the number of applicants for the position.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The vacancy was not notified in the Post Office Circular, as I filled it by the appointment of the Assistant Secretary to the Natal Post Office. This officer had been transferred to the Colonial service from the Post Office service in London; and, as he had gained much useful experience and rendered excellent service in Natal, I was glad to be able to comply with his application for reappointment to a post in this country.

Regulations for Halfpenny Post.

MR. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the surcharges made by the Department under the halfpenny postal rate on open order forms where the word "send" has been employed, whilst the words "per Sutton" are permitted to pass under the halfpenny rate; and, if so, will he give directions for remedying the inconvenience caused to traders by the delay of such correspondence as well as by its surcharge.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The surcharges to which the hon. Member refers are in accordance with the published regulations of the halfpenny post. In framing these new regulations, under which the public are allowed to write in orders for goods sent for a halfpenny various particulars, including an indication of the mode of consignment of the goods, such as "per Sutton", it was not found practicable to permit the insertion of manuscript instructions such as send, although this would of course pass if printed. Attention has been recently called to the regulations on these points both in the Post Office Guide and by the exhibition of notices in every post office.

Recommendations of Committee on Aged Pensioners Bill.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether His Majesty's Government propose to take any steps in pursuance of the Report of the Select Committee on the Aged Pensioners Bill last session either to carry out the general recommendations of the Committee, by initiating a scheme of pensions with the restrictions and machinery suggested in the Report, or else to give effect to the special recommendations of the Committee as to the separation of the aged and infirm poor, now in workhouses, from paupers who are imbecile, and the provision of special treatment in cottage homes, or otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am afraid that I cannot hold out any expectation that the Government will propose legislation, during the present session, for the purpose of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee. It is competent for the guardians to provide separate accommodation for the indoor poor who are aged and infirm, and I readily give attention to any proposals made to me by a board of guardians for this purpose.

Local Government Board and the Widening of Lordship Lane, Tottenham.

Mr. BIGWOOD (Middlesex, Brentford): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Local Government Board have refused their consent, under Section 60 of The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, to a sale by the London County Council to the Middlesex County Council of land required for the widening of Lordship Lane, Tottenham; whether consent is withheld in spite of the fact that the Middlesex County Council has compulsory powers of purchase, under their Light Railways Order, and because the Board require the sale to be made under the provisions of The Lands Clauses Act, 1845; and will he explain why the County Council of Middlesex should be put to the cost attending the payment into and out of Court involved by procedure under this Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am aware of the case referred to and of the powers of the Middlesex County Council under their Light Railways Order. I am, however, advised that the proposed transaction must be carried out under The Lands Clauses Act, 1845, and that no consent on the part of the Local Government Board, under Section 60 of The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, would obviate the need for complying with the procedure under the Act of 1845.

Sentences on Adults Involving Use of the Birch.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many sentences have been passed on adults under which those sentenced have been directed to receive strokes with the birch during the last twelve months, and on what occasions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The Returns for 1903 have not yet all been received, and I cannot therefore answer the Question as regards the last twelve months. In 1902 the number of persons above the age of sixteen sentenced to be birched was four. Three were cases under The Garrotters Act, 1863, and one was a case under The Vagrancy Act, 1824.

Petitions Presented under Clause 3 of the Patents Act.

Colonel DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the President of the

Board of Trade if he will state how many petitions have been presented under Clause 3, Sub-sections 1 and 5, of the Patents Act, 1902: and what has been the result.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Three petitions have been presented to the Board of Trade under the section in question. One petition has been withdrawn by the petitioner. The other two are still pending. I am considering whether any steps should be taken to call public attention to the provisions of the Act.

Board of Trade Inquiry into Wreck of Schooner "William S. Green."

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the wreck of the schooner "William S. Green," at Downend, near Croyde, on the North Devon coast, and to the inquest held on the 23rd inst. on the bodies of the men drowned by reason of the wreck; and, if so, whether he will order an inquiry by the Board of Trade into the circumstances of the wreck, and will see that such inquiry shall embrace the question of the efficiency of the coastguard service in the vicinity of the disaster.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Yes, Sir, my attention has been called to the case of the "William S. Green" to which the hon. Member refers, and I have ordered a formal investigation to be held into the circumstances which will, of course, embrace the efficiency of the coastguard in so far as it has any bearing on the case.

Sale of Crown Lands for Building Purposes.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he is aware that Crown lands belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster, in Yorkshire, are being sold as freehold building sites; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to prevent this perpetual alienation of land now in possession of the Crown.

(*Answered by Sir William Walrond.*) The Chancellor and Council of the Duchy have occasionally sanctioned the sale of plots of land for building, in districts in which houses are much required, but in which there is a strong disinclination to take building leases. There seems to be no reason why the Chancellor and Council should not pursue the same course in the future.

Depredations by Turkish Brigands—Payment of Compensation.

MR. YOXALL: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has now obtained from the Turkish Government the amounts claimed by British-Indian subjects robbed by brigands on the highway between Jeddah and Mecca in the years 1889 to 1902; and whether His Majesty's Government will confer with the Netherlands Government as to the measures to be taken for the protection of the Mahommedan, Dutch, and British subjects who are this year preparing to visit the shrines at Mecca and Medina on their journey between Jeddah and those places.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) As stated in this House by my predecessor, in reply to a Question on the 18th of March last,† the claims of British-Indian pilgrims for losses by robbery in the Hedjaz, between 1892 and 1898, have been settled. His Majesty's Government have not, since that date, received any further information in regard to such claims. His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will be requested to inquire into the matter, and to report whether, in his opinion, there is any necessity for the adoption of measures such as those suggested in the last paragraph of the Question.

Irish National School Assistant Teachers.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in conformity with the undertaking given last session, he will direct the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland to have the average reduced from sixty to fifty to qualify for an assistant in national schools; will he state the number of teachers in each of the new grades in which they have been recently placed;

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxix., 1102.

and whether it is the intention of the Commissioners in future to insist on the same standard of proficiency in all schools in order to qualify for the promotion of a teacher to a higher grade.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Respecting the first part of the Question, I must refer to my reply to the similar inquiry addressed to me on the 17th instant by the hon. Member for North Cork[†]. The following are the number of teachers as recognised in the different grades at present:—

(A.) Principals.

Grade.	Men.	Women
I. (1)	273	216
I. (2)	429	284
II.	1,435	1,017
III.	2,467	2,135

(B.) Assistants.

I. (1)	17	10
I. (2)	14	18
II.	14	28
III.	1,043	2,635

The inspectors are directed when furnishing reports on schools to take into consideration (a) the locality of the schools; (b) the condition of the school house and premises; (c) the equipment of the schools; (d) the teaching staff; and (e) the social condition, ages, &c., of the pupils, when forming an estimate of the work done in the schools. Subject to these conditions the inspectors are to use the words excellent, very good, good, fair, middling, or bad, to express their opinion on the schools they inspect.

Exports of Sugar from British West Indies to the United Kingdom.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state, in view of the operation of the Sugar Convention, whether the exports of sugar from the British West Indies to the United Kingdom have increased; and whether he has any official information showing that the position of the West Indian sugar growers is improved.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The imports into the United Kingdom of sugar from the British West Indies, including British Guiana and British Honduras, during the five months (September to January) since the Brussels Convention came into force have been 11,261 tons, as compared with 7,953 tons in the corresponding period a year earlier. As a matter of fact, therefore, there has been an increase in the exports of sugar to this country since the commencement of the Convention. A comparison of this nature can, however, be of no practical value until after the close of the crop season, which commenced at the beginning of this year; and even then it will be misleading unless allowance is made for the difference in the size of the crops of the years compared, for the effect of the treaty between the United States and Cuba, and also for the conditions affecting the Canadian market. As regards the second part of the Question, I have not, and am not likely, for some time to come, to have any official information showing any definite improvement in the position of the West Indian sugar planter resulting from the Convention. The existence of large surplus stocks of sugar in the home market necessarily retards the natural operation of the abolition of bounties, while the Cuban treaty has placed the British West Indian planter at a great disadvantage in the United States market.

Gold commandeered from British Banks at Pretoria—Compensation to Shareholders.

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if, in view of the loss to British shareholders in the four British banks in Pretoria by reason of the commandeering of gold by the then South African Government in 1900 to the amount of £255,000, he will reconsider his decision in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) My predecessor considered this question on two separate occasions and decided against the claim of the banks. I have again thoroughly gone into the matter, and, while greatly regretting the loss sustained, have been unable to come to any different conclusion.

[†] See page 19.

Repairs to H. M. S. "Buzzard."

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he could expedite the repairs to H.M.S. "Buzzard," so as to save members of the Naval Volunteer Reserve the time and trouble of going to the docks to drill.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) Instructions have already been given for the completion of the refit of H.M.S. "Buzzard" by an early date, and I am afraid that no further action is possible in this direction without disorganising other very important work in progress in the dockyard.

Re-boilering in the Navy.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will say on what vessels was re-boilering work commenced during the year 1903, and what vessels have the Admiralty decided to re-boiler in the near or immediate future.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The following are the vessels on which re-boilering work was commenced during the year 1903:—Three torpedo gunboats ("Circe," "Leda," and "Halcyon"). One special service vessel ("Wildfire"). Fourteen first class torpedo boats. Boilers for subsidiary or instructional services were also fitted in "Invincible," "Nelson," "Northumberland," "Ariadne" (Old), and "Espiegle" (Old). The re-boilering of the following vessels will be undertaken during the coming financial year:—One special service vessel ("Magnet"). One tug ("Alligator"). Twenty-six first class torpedo boats. Boilers for subsidiary or instructional services will also be fitted in the following ships next financial year:—"Hector," "Warrior," "Triumph."

Naval Repairs in Private Dockyards.

MR. RUNCIMAN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will say what ships have been under repair in private dockyards throughout the year 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The following ships were undergoing refit in private dockyards during the year 1903:—Four battleships ("Colossus," "Howe," "Canopus," "Glory"). Six first class cruisers ("Niobe," "Crescent," "St. George," "Aurora," "Terrible," "Endymion"). Two second class cruisers ("Hermes," "Astraea"). Two third class cruisers ("Pelorus," "Psyche"). Three gunboats ("Jason," "Leda," "Circe"). Six destroyers ("Dove," "Leopard," "Spitfire," "Teazer," "Flirt," "Wizard"). Two gunvessels ("Hecla," "Halcyon"). Eight torpedo boats. In addition to the above, several ships were sent to private firms for small repairs during the year.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

2nd Battalion Devonshire Regiment.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the 2nd Battalion Devonshire Regiment are to be quartered in huts on Crown Hill, and not in Raglan Barracks, on their arrival in Devonport.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): In July last my right hon. friend the Postmaster-General expressed a hope that it would be possible to quarter a battalion of the Devonshire Regiment in its own county. An opportunity of giving effect to this intention has now arisen, and the 2nd Battalion Devonshire Regiment will be quartered in Devonport. The question of what particular barracks shall be assigned to the Battalion is one for the decision of the Field Marshal commanding the 2nd Army Corps.

Drafts for India.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether soldiers enlisted for three years are now being sent to India in the hope of their re-engaging; and whether, in the event of their not doing so, the cost of their passage home will be made a charge on the British taxpayer; what the cost per head of such men will be to England and India respectively in the event of their not re-engaging; and whether the policy of sending such men to India has received the sanction of the Indian military authorities.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A certain number of men who have not extended are being sent to India. Should they not extend in India the extra cost of passage will fall on the Home Government. The relative extra cost depends on the period during which they serve in India, but the precise adjustment has not yet been settled. The policy of sending such men to India, under present circumstances, has received the assent of the Indian Government.

Captain NORTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the number of these men?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir, it varies from day to day.

Ordnance Factories.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the desirability of bringing to the notice of the Army Council the expenditure caused by the creation of a Central Office at the Ordnance Factories, and the increase of the emoluments of the civil staff, resulting in an increased annual charge of £60,000; and whether he will consider the desirability of placing under the control of the Master-General of the Ordnance the entire staff employed in the Ordnance Factories.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The creation of the Central Office at the Ordnance Factories, which took place in 1889, has thrown no increased charge upon the public, but has led to substantial economies. I do not understand the figures quoted by the hon. and gallant Member. The entire staff of the Ordnance Factories has been for the past five years under the control of the Director-General of Ordnance; and the question of their future control is included in the consideration of the War Office Reorganisation Committee, who have not yet reported upon this point.

Imperial Yeomanry.

Mr. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what number of Imperial Yeomanry, who went out to South Africa during the war, took their discharge there with the intention of settling in the country.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The number was 2,638.

Donegal Militia.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention of the General Commanding the district that the recruits of the 5th Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (the Donegals) shall be this year called up for preliminary training at Omagh instead of at Ballyshannon, the headquarters of the battalion; will he state whether the recruits of this regiment have on any occasion hitherto been trained at Omagh; whether separation and other allowances will be made to the members of the permanent staff brought away from their families to Omagh; whether he is aware that the recruits during training will be deprived of the use of the rifle range at Finner, Ballyshannon; and will he say whether he has received any representations from the people of Ballyshannon on the subject.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The recruits of this battalion are to do their preliminary drill at Omagh. From the records of the last thirty years it does not appear that the recruits have on any previous occasion trained at Omagh. Separation and other usual allowances will be granted. Musketry, both for recruits and trained militiamen, will take place at Finner Camp. A memorial on this subject was received in the War Office two days ago from the Town Commissioners at Ballyshannon, and is being dealt with.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why has this transfer of the place of training been insisted on?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is a matter within the discretion of the Field Marshal Commanding in Ireland to be decided on purely military grounds, and I am not prepared to interfere.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Regulations for Women and Children.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the women and children who may accompany Chinese coolies indentured under the Ordinance to work in South Africa, will be under the same proscriptions as to residence in a particular place, and as to leave of absence being granted only for forty-eight hours by special licence, as the coolies themselves; and, if so, whether the women and children will be subject to the same penalties as the coolies themselves for breach of the regulations.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The Ordinance contemplates the application of the same conditions and restrictions to a wife or any member of the family of a labourer as far as practicable. The means for carrying out such conditions is a matter for regulations under the Ordinance.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what will become in South Africa of the children male and female of coolies, indentured under the Ordinance for work in the South African mines, when they reach their sixteenth birthday.

*MR. LYTTELTON: This matter is receiving consideration.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can say when he will be in a position to lay upon the Table the Chinese Labour Ordinance and Regulations in their first complete and operative form.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not able to name a date.

DR. MACNAMARA: Will there be any long delay?

*MR. LYTTELTON: No.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the regulations will be laid on the Table before any Chinese are recruited?

[No answer was returned.]

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—More Papers Promised.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any communications respecting the Chinese Labour Ordinance were despatched either to Lord Milner or to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal subsequent to the debate on the Amendment to the Address dealing with the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal; and, if so, whether he will lay upon the Table copies of the communications.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have been in communication with Lord Milner since the debate and propose shortly to lay further Papers.

British Indians and the Transvaal Ordinance.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before the Third Reading of the Transvaal Ordinance was taken, there were communications between the Home Government and the Transvaal Government as to the retention of Clause 34 that relates to British-Indians; and whether the retention of that clause in the Ordinance was sanctioned by the Home Government and the Indian Government.

*MR LYTTELTON: The answer is in the affirmative. Lord Milner was informed by me on behalf of His Majesty's Government that the clause should be regarded as a temporary provision, and the India Office has not raised objection to its retention as a temporary measure.

Chinese Passengers Act.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government will direct the Governor of Hong-Kong to revise and alter, under the provisions of Section 3 of the Chinese Passengers Act, 1852, Schedule A of that Act, and in particular whether more modern drugs will be substituted for the calomel, jalap, blue pill, and Epsom salts, prescribed for the Chinese under that schedule.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Hong-Kong Ordinance 1. of 1889 repeals the drastic and somewhat antiquated schedule, and requires the provision of suitable medicines and medical stores to the satisfaction of the emigration officer, who by the Ordinance is empowered to take the advice of a medical expert.

Hours of Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the regulations to be promulgated under the Transvaal Labour Ordinance will provide for a fixed maximum number of days labour in the year, and for a fixed maximum number of hours of work per day for each indentured labourer; and whether they will set out the rates of wages to be paid.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am communicating with Lord Milner on the subjects in the hon. Member's Question. The mining regulations already in force strictly limit Sunday labour. In addition to the British officer appointed by Government to supervise the emigration from China the Chinese Government propose to appoint a Chinese Protector of Emigrants whose duty, among other things, will be to safeguard the interests of Chinese subjects in regard to wages and all other incidents of his contract.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: May I ask whether there is any Labour Ordinance in force in any other British colony in which the limitation of hours and the question of wages is not specifically stated in the Ordinance itself?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I must have notice of that Question. There are more than 150 Ordinances.

Indian Coolie Labour.

SIR JOHN GORST: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the correspondence between the High Commissioner of South Africa and the Government of India relative to the importation of Indian coolie labour into the Transvaal.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The correspondence on this subject is not yet complete. It is therefore not proposed to lay it at present.

Postal Espionage in the Transvaal.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the power referred to by his predecessor on the 29th April, 1903, of intercepting and opening letters, documents, and parcels in the Transvaal, has been exercised during the last six months; and, if so, in how many instances; and has the proposed amendment of the Ordinance relating to this power been carried out.

MR. LYTTELTON: The power in question has not been exercised during the last six months in any instance. The Ordinance has not yet been amended.

Russia and Germany and the Bagdad Railway.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have His Majesty's Government any information that negotiations have recently been begun and are now proceeding between the German and the Russian Governments for an arrangement whereby, in return for certain advantages afforded to Russia by Germany, during the hostilities with Japan, Russia will give support to Germany in respect of the construction of the Bagdad railway and of the general extension of German predominance in Asia Minor.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The answer is in the negative.

Chinese Ambassador's Letter on the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can say why the letter in reference to Chinese labour in South Africa from the Chinese Ambassador, which was written on the 12th

February, was only presented to Members in a Parliamentary Paper on the 18th February, the day after the debate on Chinese labour.

EARL PERCY: The publication of the note of the 12th February from the Chinese Minister was delayed in order that the letter from the Colonial Office, of the 15th, should be laid at the same time. One hundred copies of the Parliamentary Paper were sent to the House of Commons on the 16th, and the remaining copies were delivered at the Vote Office at mid-day on the 17th.

Rescued Russian Sailors in Ceylon.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies has he instructed the Colonial authorities at Colombo to detain in Ceylon the 325 Russian sailors rescued from the naval action at Chemulpo; and, if so, will he state by virtue of what authority His Majesty's Government propose to detain these men; will they be treated in the same way as prisoners of war, and how will their detention be enforced.

EARL PERCY: The sailors in question took refuge on board a British man-of-war at Chemulpo. In these circumstances, should no other arrangement be arrived at by mutual consent between the combatants, His Majesty's Government believe that they would best fulfil the obligations of a neutral Power by interning these men in British territory until the conclusion of the war. The Japanese Government have, however, intimated that they are willing that the men should be allowed to return to Russia on their giving their parole that they will take no further part in the war. His Majesty's Government are in correspondence with the Russian Government as to the possibility of disposing of the matter upon this basis.

Suez Canal Convention.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs can he explain in what way the Suez Canal Convention of October, 1888, is held by His Majesty's Government capable of being invalidated or hindered in its operation by reserves made by His Majesty's Government in 1885, three years previous to the signature and ratification of that Convention, or by the renewal of those reserves in 1887, one year before its signature and ratification; have the other Powers concerned accepted the claim of His Majesty's Government to override a Convention by reserves previously made, or expressed their views thereon; and, if so, can the Papers embodying those views be laid upon the Table; do His Majesty's Government hold themselves entitled to adopt, or to assent to, the adoption by the Egyptian Government, for the Suez Canal in time of war, rules and regulations inconsistent with the Convention of 1888; and are the regulations issued by the Egyptian Government on the 10th instant consistent therewith.

EARL PERCY: The Convention was signed and ratified by His Majesty's Government subject to the reservations already made by them. In view of these reservations the other Signatory Powers have abstained from any steps for the purpose of bringing the Convention into active operation. There are no Papers on the subject that can be presented to Parliament. His Majesty's Government have no intention of adopting or assenting to the adoption of rules inconsistent with the general principles laid down in the Convention with regard to the navigation of the Canal in time of war, and the rules recently issued are in entire agreement with those principles.

The Zionists.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will lay upon the Table of the House the conditions under which a concession of land was offered the Zionists last year; if he will state the extent of such concession, and where situate; and if the offer is still open.

EARL PERCY: I will consider what Papers can be laid. The precise extent and situation of the area offered to the Zionists and the character of the local autonomy to be exercised by them has not yet been finally determined. The answer to the last paragraph of the Question is in the affirmative.

East Africa—Land Concession and Native Reserves.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will lay upon the Table of the House all reports from local officers on the question of land concession and native reserves in East Africa.

Earl PERCY: The opinions and suggestions of local officers in regard to questions of land concession and native reserves formed the basis of the Crown Lands Ordinance, 1902, and of the various rules and notices which have been issued in connection therewith. These regulations have all been published, and His Majesty's Government do not propose to lay any Papers on the subject.

Cotton Planting in Central Africa—Scarcity of Labour.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that cotton planting in Central Africa is being retarded by the scarcity of labour; and whether, having regard to the importance of encouraging the growth of cotton within the British Empire, he will reconsider the sanction given by him to the recruiting in the British Central African Protectorate of 5,000 natives for the Transvaal mines.

Earl PERCY: The reports received from our officials in British Central Africa do not indicate that there is any scarcity of labour. His Majesty's Government therefore see no reason to reconsider the sanction which they have given to additional recruitment for the Transvaal mines.

Cost of the London Telephone System.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the amount expended on the new telephone system; whether that system is now completed; and, if not, will he explain why hundreds of men, many with a record of long service, have been discharged.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The expenditure on the London Telephone Exchange System amounted to £1,495,602 on the 31st December last. The system is not complete. Its extension is dependent on the provision of further funds by Parliament, and I hope shortly to move a Resolution for leave to introduce a Bill to provide additional capital for this purpose. It has been necessary to restrict the expenditure on telephone works in London, and to reduce the number of workmen employed, in order to avoid exceeding the expenditure authorised by Parliament. If, as I hope, further expenditure is authorised at an early date, the works will be pressed forward as rapidly as possible.

Central Telegraph Office—Women Season Substitutes.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that certain women season substitutes in the Central Telegraph Office, London, have been informed that their services are to be discontinued, and that some of these telegraphists have been employed for a number of years in this department, and have proved themselves efficient during this period, he can take steps to retain their services.

Lord STANLEY: The services of most of the women season substitutes in the Central Telegraph Office have been retained up to the present, and so far as they can be usefully employed their services will be continued, but, owing to the diminution of telegraph work in that office, it is doubtful whether this course can be justified much longer.

Post Office—Holloway Instrument Factory.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why mechanics and learners have been discharged from the Holloway Instrument Factory during the past two years owing to alleged slackness of work, seeing that the factory and also the old Parkhurst Theatre are at present full of instruments made by a Swedish firm.

Lord STANLEY: The factory at Holloway is primarily a factory for repairs, although some of the more delicate instruments, such as the Wheatstone, are made there. The instruments to which the hon. Member refers would not in any case be made at this factory. The discharge of workmen depends on fluctuations in the work. As a matter of fact, the total number is now about fifty more than it was two years ago.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: Cannot the instruments be made in London?

LORD STANLEY: All that we require cannot be made in England. We get all we can at home, but have to go abroad for the rest. There are certain instruments we require which are the property of patentees in foreign countries, and which can only be obtained in those countries.

Whisky Adulteration.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will cause instructions to be issued by the Joint Boards of Customs and Inland Revenue for permits attached to all blends leaving bond to truthfully describe the composition of such blends, whether in cask or in bottle, with a view to letting the public know what they are consuming.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): No, Sir; the Revenue authorities cannot undertake to do more than prohibit the use of any labels implying a Government guarantee of accuracy.

MR. KILBRIDE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware of the character of the frauds which are perpetrated in bond? Is he satisfied to connive at these frauds?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I must ask for notice of any further Questions.

Ventilation of the House of Commons.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he can state what changes have recently been made in the ventilation and cleaning of the House of Commons, and what further alterations of system are proposed to ensure the better health of Members.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I have to invite the attention of the hon. Member to the reply given to my hon. friend the Member for Dumbartonshire on the 5th instant.† I may add that the cleaning arrangements affecting the Chamber have been placed under a single control. Experiments are being continued for testing the atmosphere of the Chamber as regards the presence of bacteria. Besides more frequent cleaning of the matting on the floor, disinfection will be daily applied.

Hyde Park.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he will state what is the object of the construction of earth and shrubs in Hyde Park, near to the Magazine, which has abstracted half or a whole acre from the amenities enjoyed by the public; is there any intention to cut a road from Buckingham Palace to Piccadilly through the Green Park; and, if so, by whose authority is it to be done, and is it too late to be countermanded.

LORD BALCARRES: In regard to the first part of the Question, I have to refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to my hon. friend the Member for Stoke on Monday last.‡ The reply to the latter part is in the negative.

Voluntary Schools—Repairs of Fabric.

MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, as those managers of a voluntary school who are appointed by the local authorities are personally liable for the repairs of the fabric of the schools equally with the foundation managers, and as there is no way by which they can avoid this liability except by refusing their consent to repairs, he will take steps to amend the Education Act of 1902, by relieving the managers appointed by local authorities from liability.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 473.

‡ See page 536.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The hon. Member's Question is based on a misapprehension. No manager is personally liable for the cost of repairs to the fabric unless he makes himself so by becoming a party to a contract. Managers appointed by local authorities need have no difficulty in renouncing from the outset any liability for the cost of these repairs: the foundation managers could not then be regarded as their agents to commit them to any such liability. There is no reason why local authority managers should not, under these conditions, agree to the necessity for repairs without incurring personal liability for the expenditure.

MR. ASHTON: Are they held liable unless they gave notice to the effect that they are not liable?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: It is easy for them to give notice through the public Press, and to have their renunciation recorded on the minutes of the managers' meetings.

Scottish Schools—Precautions against Fire.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether, in view of recent fires in schools, the Education Department is enjoining on school boards the necessity of precautions against fire; and whether they have considered the advisability of fire drill for the children.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Department is convinced that school boards generally are fully alive to the necessity of precautions against fire. It is one of the points most carefully considered in connection with the approval of school plans. Whether fire drill is possible is a question which school managers must decide; but no school would be considered to be efficiently organised in which the orderly and expeditious clearing of classrooms upon a given signal was not regularly practised.

Irish Law Clerkships.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, as representing the Lord Chancellor, whether, in view of the fact that the system of competitive examination for the position of clerks in the King's Bench and other Divisions of His Majesty's Courts in Ireland is not in practice, and that recently a retired army officer on pension was appointed to a clerkship without passing any competitive examination, he will say on whose recommendation this officer, was appointed, and if he will take steps to secure that in all future appointments a public competitive examination for these positions shall take place.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. Save where expressly excepted by statute the senior clerkships in the different Divisions of the High Court of Justice in Ireland are filled by competition, and that rule has not been departed from. Recently, however, a clerk in the King's Bench Division was selected for transfer to another Department, and pending his passing the examination for the latter office he was given leave of absence without salary. Thereupon a supernumerary writing clerk, already attached to the King's Bench Division, who appears to be a retired officer of His Majesty's Forces, was, by the President of the Divison, acting under one of the Rules of Court, required to discharge temporarily the duties of the absent clerk. This is probably the case referred to. Should the transfer be completed the clerkship thereby rendered vacant in the King's Bench Division will be filled up in the ordinary way by open competition.

MR. NANNETTI: Am I to take it, then, that this officer is temporarily employed and will not remain permanently in this position?

MR. ATKINSON: He cannot be made permanent until he is qualified by statute.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Who has the power of nomination in this case?

MR. ATKINSON: I have answered the Question.

Ennistymon Workhouse Clothing Contract.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Ennistymon guardians in which it is asked by what authority Sergeants Coyne, Brennan, and Breden of the Royal Irish Constabulary questioned members of the clothing committee as to their reasons for rejecting clothing supplied by a contractor to the workhouse; and whether he will say by what authority the police acted in this matter.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The three sergeants named discussed this matter, which excited local interest, with some members of the clothing committee in the course of casual conversation. No inquiry was made, or directed to be made.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Had the police any power to interfere with the discretion of this committee?

MR. WYNDHAM: No. Persons occupying official positions should be discreet in any action they take, but you cannot always secure that.

Labourers' Cottage Schemes in County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Shanahan, of Boskill, Cahirconlish, county Limerick, at the inquiry in Limerick No. 1 District Council on the 7th Scheme under the Labourers Acts was unsuccessful in obtaining an additional half acre by reason of the fact that he had left his cottage for some months but with his sister in charge of it; and whether, seeing that he returned after those few months, can he arrange that Shanahan may obtain the additional half acre which is situated on Mrs. Minchin's grass lands amounting to 230 acres.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no ower now to authorise the acquisition of an additional allotment in this case, the Provisional Order having been made absolute. It will be open, however, to the district council when formulating a fresh scheme to renew the proposal in this respect.

Doonbeg Disturbances.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the police under charge of the county inspector whilst attending near Doonbeg, county Clare, on the 11th inst., to prevent a breach of the peace between the owners of land and employees of the railway company, whom the former believed to be illegally interfering with their property, identified themselves with one of the parties to the dispute, and with force drove back the people from the assertion by lawful means of what they are advised to be their legal rights.

MR. WYNDHAM: The farmers on the occasion mentioned assembled with pitchforks, sticks, and stones, and their attitude was violent and threatening. The assertion of a civil right, even if it existed, in such a manner was illegal and could not be permitted with any regard to the preservation of the public peace, No force was used by the police in restraining the crowd.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask whether, suppose I propose to do something illegal, you will send a police force to prevent any one interfering with me.

MR. WYNDHAM: It depends entirely on the circumstances.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Had not the farmers a perfect right to assemble on their own land to prevent trespass?

[No answer was returned.]

Irish Court of Chancery.

MR. P. A. MCHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Vice-Chancellor of the Chancery Court in Ireland has recently retired and that his place has been filled by the transfer of Mr. Justice Barton from the King's Bench Division, he will say whether any saving has been thus effected, and, if so, how much; and whether the Government intend to fill up the vacancy.

MR. WYNDHAM: The annual saving effected by the transfer of Mr. Justice Barton will amount to £867. It is not proposed to fill the vacancy in the Judgeship of the King's Bench Division.

Irish Judges of Assize.

MR. P. A. McHUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed by the Irish Executive to amalgamate the Connaught and North-West Circuits to enable the number of Judges of the High Court to be still further reduced when vacancies occur.

MR. WYNDHAM: I would prefer not to go into this matter, and I must refer the hon. Member to the reply already given.

St. Stephen's Green Parliamentary Vacancy.

MR. P. A. McHUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Crown Solicitor for Carlow has been selected as Unionist candidate for the St. Stephen's Green Division of Dublin; if so, will he state whether there is any authority in Ireland whose duty it is to prevent public officials connected with the administration of the Law from taking part in Party politics; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand that Mr. Goddard, though invited to stand as candidate, has not accepted the invitation.

Porter and Crossbe Estate, County Tyrone.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Porter and Crossbe Estate, county Tyrone, first went into the Land Judge's Court; whether the tenants were served with notice of sale in 1898, and if he is aware that whilst sale is pending a portion of the tenantry cannot get second-term rents fixed and are paying the old rent, and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no specific information on the matters mentioned in the Question. The sale of the property under the Act of 1896 presented many difficulties owing to complications in the title. But negotiations are now pending with the Estates Commissioners with a view to the sale of the estate under Section 7 of the Act of last year.

Labourers Acts.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what objection there is to publishing the reports of the inspectors who have recently been inquiring into the working of the Labourers Acts in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reports were made for the private information of the Local Government Board to supplement information already in its possession. It would be contrary to established practice to publish such reports, which are regarded as confidential.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: In view of the approaching introduction of the Labourers Bill, is there any objection to publishing a summary of these reports?

MR. WYNDHAM: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman had better wait until he has heard what I say in introducing the Bill.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): When will it be introduced?

MR. WYNDHAM: At the earliest possible opportunity.

Education Inquiry in Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inquiry into primary and intermediate education in Ireland has yet concluded: and whether he intends to lay the reports of the inspector upon the Table of the House, and when.

MR. WYNDHAM: The inquiry conducted by Mr. Dale into primary education has concluded, and his report, which was received by the Government on the 21st ultimo, will be laid on the Table in the course of a few day. The inquiry into the subject of intermediate education has not yet been undertaken.

Arklow Harbour.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Wicklow, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the harbour at Arklow was constructed by the Irish Board of Works on a plan condemned and protested against at the time of construction by the people of the locality, and that the plan has now been proved to have been faulty, and the harbour has become useless, with the result that the important industries of the town, namely, the Cordite Factory of Messrs. Kynoch and the Parnell Quarries, are threatened with extinction, the Board of Works will be directed to put the harbour into a safe condition without expense to the locality, which is in no way responsible for the defective plans.

MR. WYNDHAM: The plans were opposed by some persons in the locality and supported by others. They were approved by two independent engineers of the highest eminence, whose report was presented to Parliament in 1886. The liability for the maintenance of the harbour is vested in the Harbour Commissioners.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: But were not the plans condemned by the local public bodies in the locality?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am unable to say.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will put another Question down.

Police Evidence at Ballinrobe Sessions.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by two policemen against a publican named Faby, at the Ballinrobe Petty Sessions, quite recently, who was charged with a breach of the Licensing Acts, when the magistrates, having a doubt about the case, left the bench and proceeded to the spot; that on their return they declared it was impossible for the police to have seen what they swore to, and unanimously dismissed the case; and, if so, whether, in view of these facts, he will order a prosecution for perjury to be instituted forthwith.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have received this morning reports of the proceedings in the case referred to. These reports are now under consideration, and if the hon. Member will postpone his Question until Monday, I shall then be in a position to announce the decision of the Government in the matter.

Irish Estates Commissioners' Clerks.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland the number and *status* of the clerks at the disposal of the Estates Commissioners; and if it is the intention of the Government to carry on the work of the Department in the seven-roomed house now occupied by the Commission.

MR. WYNDHAM: The indoor establishment consists of a secretary, an assistant-secretary, and two assistant examiners; two first-class clerks, three second-class clerks, seven second division clerks, nine third-class clerks, and eight temporary clerks. There has been some unavoidable difficulty in providing sufficient accommodation, but arrangements have now been made for placing two houses at the early disposal of the Commissioners, Nos. 25 and 26, Upper Merrion Street.

MR. KILBRIDE: Have they been merely nominated?

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): And are they all land agents?

[No answer was returned.]

Housing of the Irish Working Classes.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the petition from the United Irish Trades Congress, presented to this House on the 23rd February, 1904, in which housing legislation for the working classes in Ireland is called for, owing to the conditions under which many of these people are compelled to exist; and whether, in his proposed Labourers Bill, he purposes to deal with the suggestions set out in the petition, or whether he proposes to deal in a separate measure with the housing of the working classes in cities and towns in Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: As at present advised it is my intention to deal with the housing of the working classes in towns in a separate measure. The petition will be considered.

Labourers' Cottage Schemes for Strabane.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the necessity for labourers' cottages in the electoral division of Ballymagorry, near Strabane, in the county of Tyrone, and to the correspondence with the Local Government Board, Ireland, relating thereto; and whether he will take steps to extend to that district the benefits of the Labourers Acts.

Mr. WYNDHAM: A memorial on the subject was recently received, and the Local Government Board is in correspondence with the District Council. The erection of three cottages in this division was sanctioned by the Board in July last.

Lough Erne Navigation.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if there is any fund under the Department of Agriculture for Ireland or from any other source by which the inland navigation of Lough Erne, situate in the counties of Fermanagh and Cavan, could be subsidised and developed; and, if so, will he state what action the Department proposes to take in the matter.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The aiding or facilitating the carriage and distribution of produce comes within the purposes of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act, 1899. The Department will consider any definite representations that may be made to it in this connection in respect of the inland navigation of Lough Erne.

Irish Drainage and Land Improvement.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolution of the Clare County Council, which asks that a Bill should be introduced in the current session of Parliament which will empower county councils to carry out drainage works and land impovements in their respective counties, and provide means by way of which loans at a rate of interest similar to that provided for in the recent Irish Land Bill can be made to county councils; and whether this matter will be considered by the Government at an early date.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution has been received. The matter is under consideration, but I cannot undertake to introduce legislation in the present session.

Small Dwellings Acquisition Act (Ireland).

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant the Return standing on to-day's Notice Paper in reference to The Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir; the Return will be granted.

The following is the Return referred to—Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899, (Ireland). Return giving the names of the local authorities in Ireland that have put into operation The Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899; the number of applicants to whom money has been advanced by each such authority for the purpose of acquiring ownership of their houses under the Act; the amounts of the advance in each case; and the rate of interest charged to applicants on the loan.

Londonderry Town Clerk.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state under what Statutes and on what statement of facts, as to age and length of service and otherwise, was the sanction of the Lord-Lieutenant given to a retiring allowance to the present town clerk of the county borough of Londonderry on his proposed retirement in April next, and by whom the statement was submitted; whether the Lord-Lieutenant will receive from the ratepayers of the borough a memorial on the law and facts of the case, and if satisfied that the town clerk is not entitled to a retiring allowance, would he reconsider his consent so given; and, will he explain why was this information denied to a member of the corporation by the Local Government Board.

MR. WYNDHAM: The proposal to grant a retiring allowance to the town clerk of Londonderry was made by the Corporation of that city at meetings held in May and August last. The Lord-Lieutenant's sanction to the allowance was given in pursuance of the Local Officers Superannuation Act, 1869, on the understanding that the town clerk's retirement would not take effect before next April, when he will have attained the age of sixty years. The Lord-Lieutenant acted upon a statement signed by the Mayor of Derry. The Local Government Board is not aware that there is any foundation for the suggestion at the end of the Question. I cannot undertake that the Lord-Lieutenant will re-open the case, but any representations that may be made to him in the matter will be considered.

MR. MURPHY: Is it not the fact that according to law any officer filling a position such as that of town clerk, who performs other duties, is not entitled to superannuation. Has not the town clerk of Derry notoriously filled other offices, and has he not obtained superannuation simply because a member of the Government represents Derry City in this House.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Subsidies to Irish Tourist Traffic.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will reconsider the decision to withdraw the Government subsidy in connection with the tourist traffic between Kilrush and Tarbert, and also the coach services in Clare and Kerry; and if he can state what the amount of this subsidy is.

MR. WYNDHAM: The receipts in the case of the Tarbert to Kilrush steamer service to the 31st of December last amounted to £535, and the expenditure to £4,253. In the case of the two coach services the receipts were £1,480, and the expenditure £7,338. The subsidy allocated to the two coach services amounted to £8,848, and to the steamer service £5,208. I am afraid I cannot hold out any hope that the Government will reconsider the decision already come to.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman postpone altering these subsidies until the new transit scheme has developed?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am afraid that my answer to that must be in the negative. The Act of 1896 was an experimental Act to try certain routes, and, where it has been proved that the losses are so great, it seems better not to exhaust the surplus on a service which is doomed to failure, and surely it would be preferable to allot it to more favourable schemes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: But could not something be done by altering the route?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must give notice of that.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: But in view of the fact that these routes——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question on the Paper has been fully answered.

***Mr. FLAVIN**: May I ask——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I shall call attention to this matter later on.

***Mr. FLAVIN**: I am a representative of the district through which this service runs. Am I not entitled to ask a Question?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question on the Paper has been answered fully.

***Mr. FLAVIN**: Then I give notice that I will put down a Question for Monday.

Irish Labourers' Cottages.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Millstreet Rural District Council urging that a clause should be inserted in the Labourers Bill entitling the occupiers of labourers' cottages erected under the Land Commission Acts to an additional half acre of land; and, if so, whether, in view of the benefits that would be conferred by such an extension of existing legislation, he will insert a provision such as indicated.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution referred to will be considered.

Preparation of Voters' Lists.

Mr. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received from the Millstreet Union a resolution calling upon the Government to repeal Section 83 (7) of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, so as to transfer to clerks of unions the duties of preparing the jurors' and voters' lists, with a view to curtail the higher fees involved by their preparation by the secretaries of county councils, and, in view of the fact that clerks of unions possess the local knowledge which is requisite in making out correct lists, will he state what steps he proposes to take in connection with this resolution.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution has been received. It is not proposed to repeal the enactment in question, under which the duty of preparing these lists was transferred to the secretaries of county councils.

Captain Annesly's Estate.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the estate of the representatives of the late Captain Annesly, situated at and near Island, Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, has been offered to the Congested Districts Board for sale, and that an offer has been made by that Board; and whether, if there is any material difference between the demand and offer, he will advise the Congested Districts Board to make a further offer with a view to purchasing the estate for the purpose of enlarging holdings in that district.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have not yet completed my inquiries in respect of this estate, and will ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question on Monday next.

Taafe Estate, County Mayo.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that last November the Congested Districts Board made an offer for the Taafe Estate, near Ballyhaunis, in the county of Mayo, which offer has not yet been brought definitely before the Land Judge's Court in which that estate now is; and that the tenants have repeatedly offered to purchase it during the last thirty years and take it out of that Court; and, if so, whether he will take immediate steps to have this sale completed.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Negotiations for the sale of this estate are pending between the solicitors having carriage of the proceedings and the Congested Districts Board. When these have been satisfactorily settled an offer will be made by the Board in the Land Judge's Court.

O'Grady Estate, County Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board made an offer some time ago for the O'Grady estate, on which stands a portion of the town of Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, and that the Receiver on the estate refused that offer on the ground that it would deprive the graziers, who held portions of it on the eleven months' system, of their privileges in keeping large areas under grass; and whether, seeing that this Receiver has stated that he will not sell to the Board so as to prevent the enlargement of holdings, he will have full inquiries made into this case.

MR. WYNDHAM: No offer has been made by the Congested Districts Board for the purchase of the O'Grady estate. In 1902 the question was considered by the Board, but no action was taken, as it was understood that the owner and the tenants contemplated a sale through the Land Commission. I am unable to say whether the Receiver acted in the manner alleged, but in any case it would be outside his province either to accept or reject such an offer, if made.

National Expenditure.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, can he now say what decision His Majesty's Government have arrived at with reference to the recommendations of the Select Committee on National Expenditure that an Estimates Committee should be appointed, at the beginning of each session, for examination of and report on one class of the Estimates precedent to their discussion in Committee of Supply, and that a day should be provided for the consideration by this House of the Reports of the Public Accounts Committee, and an opportunity be given of taking a decision upon the recommendations embodied therein.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The matter to which my hon. friend refers has been under the consideration of the Government, and a good many Questions upon it have been postponed till Monday. If my hon. friend will postpone his Question till next Tuesday, and if the other Questions are postponed till the same day, I shall hope to make a statement in answer to them all.

Dublin Post Office—Promotions to the Clerks' Class.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can explain why from one hundred and thirteen to one hundred and seventy-nine men were passed over in the recent promotions to the clerks' class in the Dublin Post Office; can he say what were the special qualifications of the selected men; and why the claims of officers, who had been acting as clerks for a considerable length of time and who had long service and excellent records, were overlooked.

LORD STANLEY: The officers referred to were not promoted because they could not be certified to be the best qualified for the duties of supervision and control devolving on the class of clerks. The claims of all eligible officers were considered, whether they had temporarily acted as clerks or not, and I am satisfied that the officers selected were those best fitted for promotion.

MR. NANNETTI: Do they have to pass a competitive examination before getting promotion?

LORD STANLEY: Each case is decided by myself after seeing the officer's record.

MR. NANNETTI: Have you done away with the examination altogether?

[No answer was returned.]

Dublin Post Office—Assistant Superintendent.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why a junior clerk was recently promoted to the rank of first class assistant superintendent in Dublin over the heads of those senior to him on the clerks' class and over the second class assistant superintendents, seeing that the promoted officer has practically no experience of the Dublin Office and has seldom performed supervising duties there.

Lord STANLEY: None of the officers on the second class of assistant superintendents in the Dublin sorting office could be certified to possess the qualifications necessary for promotion to the more important post of first class assistant superintendent. I selected an officer who was not only exceptionally well fitted for promotion, but better qualified then any of those who stood above him. This officer had long experience, although a comparatively short part of his service was in the Dublin Office; and I am satisfied that his promotion was fully justified in the interest of the public service.

Dublin Post Office—Leave Arrangements.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that dissatisfaction exists in the Dublin sorting office with reference to the annual leave arrangements for the coming year by which large batches are listed for leave in March, April, and October, and comparatively few in the summer months; and whether, in view of the practice of the Department to allow an equal number out in each term of leave as is the case in the telegraph branch in Dublin, and of the fact that although a memorial from the staff was presented to the Controller, the leave is being rearranged on practically the same plan as the original one which has been withdrawn, he will take steps to provide a system of annual leave distributed equally over the summer months.

Lord STANLEY: The circumstances to which the hon. Member refers have not been brought before me; but I will make inquiry.

Armagh Post Office—Staff Arrangements.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the male staff at Armagh Post Office has been reduced, and in consequence the working of both counter and postal duties has fallen upon a few men; and will he state whether the practice of withdrawing an officer for temporary duty without inviting applicants is to be repeated this season, and whether, in view of the depletion of the male staff, he will cause inquiry to be made.

Lord STANLEY: I am aware that the number of male sorting clerks and telegraphists at Armagh has been reduced by one, by the substitution of a female for a male officer. At the same time, however, the staff has been strengthened by the employment of two additional female officers. I will have inquiry made as regards the selection of an officer for temporary duty.

Armagh Post Office—Learner's Pay.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a learner, who has been employed at the Armagh Post Office, has received no salary for the first twelve months, and is now in receipt of only six shillings a week, whether the official reports show that he has discharged his duties in a competent manner; and whether he will consider the advisability of granting him some increase of pay.

Lord STANLEY: I am not aware of the facts, but I will inquire into them.

Cash-on-Delivery Post in Ireland.

Mr. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received resolutions from local authorities in Ireland objecting to the cash-on-delivery post as being calculated to inflict injury on traders and shopkeepers in country towns and villages in Ireland; and, if so, will he state what are the intentions of his Department towards this post.

Lord STANLEY: Memorials from certain associations in Ireland, objecting to the institution of a postal system of cash-on-delivery, have been received. As regards the rest of the Question I must refer the hon. Member to an Answer which I gave to a similar Question asked by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Tyrone on the 22nd instant.†

Cork Post Office—Rates of Pay for American Mails.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will say on whose authority the special rate of pay for the working of American mails in the Cork Post Office was abolished; and whether, seeing that this rate which was in vogue for twenty years had the sanction of Parliament as an encouragement to the staff to expedite their work, steps will be taken to restore it.

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† See page 564.

LORD STANLEY: The change to which the hon. Member refers was sanctioned in the ordinary course. I am informed that only one man suffered temporarily from the change, and that to the extent of one penny per hour. In his case I have sanctioned the payment of the former rate.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Is there any authority to override the sanction of Parliament?

LORD STANLEY: I think we have perfect power to alter the scale of pay according to the duty which may be imposed. I am going more fully into the question of this mail at the present time.

Committee of Defence.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state under what Vote the salary of the Secretary of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet and his Staff will be provided, and if it is intended to give the House any opportunity of discussing the exact functions of his post. In putting the Question may I offer the congratulations of the Opposition side of the House to the right hon. Gentleman on his return to his seat.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am grateful to the right hon. Baronet and his friends for their congratulations. I think it would be extremely desirable that there should be an opportunity for discussing the Committee of Defence upon the Estimates because it is only in that way that any general debate can take place on matters in which both the Army and the Navy are concerned. The ruling of the Chair has hitherto been that in discussing the Navy Estimates nothing connected with the Army can be debated, and in discussing the Army Estimates nothing connected with the Navy can be introduced. There should, no doubt, be an opportunity of discussing the combination of the two defensive forces of the Empire; and probably, if and when the change foreshadowed in the Question takes effect, the debate can most properly take place on the Vote for the Secretary or Staff of the Defence Committee. I shall endeavour to put it down in such a form that the First Lord of the Treasury shall be the person to deal with such a Vote. The Chairman of the Defence Committee is the Prime Minister, and I think he ought to reply. If the Prime Minister should be in the other House, there might be some difficulty in arranging who should answer for the Defence Committee, but at the present time, at all events, I shall put it down in such a form that I shall be the person to reply.

Balkan Peninsula.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury have His Majesty's Government now received any further information as to the probability of an outbreak of war in the Balkan Peninsula which they can communicate to the House; do they propose to take any, and if so, what steps to prevent the outbreak of such a war; and can they lay upon the Table any recent correspondence on the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it would be to the public interest for me to make a statement at the present time or to lay additional Papers on the Table of the House.

Great Britain and Spain.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury are His Majesty's Government aware that the Spanish Government is mobilising its forces and has ordered reinforcements of troops to the Balearic Isles, to Ceuta, to Tarifa, and to Algeciras; are His Majesty's Government in posession of any information which enables them to explain this action of the Spanish Government; and can they give this House an assurance that the relations between this country and Spain continue to be of a cordial and friendly character.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There appears to be no truth in the rumour that the Spanish Government are mobilising their forces, though I believe they are adding to the strength of some of their garrisons. I am glad to say that the relations between this country and Spain are, and are likely to remain, of the most friendly character.

Chinese Labour in the United Kingdom.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury has any reference been made in the negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Chinese Government concerning the introduction of Chinese labour into South Africa, to the possibility of Chinese labour being imported into the United Kingdom; and will His Majesty's Government undertake not to entertain any such measure without previously consulting Parliament and taking its views on the effect such a measure would have in introducing competition with British labour.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman seems to be under the impression that there is some legislative restriction in this country upon the importation of Chinese labour. That is not the case, and when it is necessary to impose such a restriction, I need hardly say that this House, which is an essential part of the Legislature, will have to be consulted before such a law is passed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): May I be allowed to repeat the expression of our pleasure at seeing the Prime Minister again? Now he will resume his familiar function of telling us what the business for next week will be.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his references to me. On Monday we shall hope to get the Speaker out of the Chair on the Navy Estimates, and on Tuesday we shall proceed with Votes A and I—that is, the Votes for men and pay. It is difficult to make any forecast, because I do not know what progress will be made with those Votes on Tuesday; but, as far as I can say, the main business next week will be the continuation of Supply.

NEW BILLS.

FALSE STATEMENTS (COMPANIES) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to False Statements with respect to the financial position of companies or other bodies," presented by Mr. Attorney-General; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General, The Lord Advocate, and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday, 7th March, and to be printed. [Bill 96.]

FOREIGN MARRIAGES BILL.

To amend the Law with respect to Marriages between British Subjects and Foreigners," presented by Mr. Macdona; supported by Mr. Talbot, Mr. Rothschild, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Winston Churchill, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Samuel Evans, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Stuart Samuel, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, and Lord Edmund Talbot; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 97.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz. :—

	£
Vote 1. Pay, etc., of the Army	2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies . .	2,030,000
Total	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1,6,7,9, and 10)	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he wished to draw attention to the item relating to gratuities to troops for active service — £100,000. He found on reference to the original Estimate that the sum asked for on that ground was only £3,000, and he was bound to point out what a remarkable increase this Supplementary Estimate showed. Indeed, the Estimate throughout was extraordinary. The first line disclosed an increase of 15,000 per cent. on the original demand; the second an increase of 1,500 per cent. and the present item one of 3,000 per cent. The Secretary for War on the preceding Monday told them this sum was required wholly—or in large part at any rate—for the South African Constabulary. Did the right hon. Gentleman remember an occurrence in the House a year ago which caused no little excitement at the time? A Supplementary Estimate was presented for £1,000,000 sterling, which was to be paid to the Colonial Government in discharge of all liabilities with regard to the South African Constabulary. A misunderstanding arose in regard to it, with the result that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer—then Postmaster-General—gave an explanatory statement on the Report stage. In the first instance, on the 3rd March, when submitting the Vote, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the Estimate represented a final adjustment and included all sums which the House would be asked to vote in connection with the administration of the Transvaal, but on the Report stage the following day the right hon. Gentleman said the Estimate represented a grant in aid of the colonial revenues in full discharge of all liabilities which would have fallen on the Government. And later on he added that the £1,000,000 was offered by the Government as a cash payment in discharge of all liabilities and it was accepted as such by Lord Milner, so that no further claim could be made on us. Now they were told that this was a new claim made by the South African Constabulary in respect of their military services, which entitled them to gratuities in the same way as ordinary troops. He held, however, that there was a clear and distinct pledge that under no circumstances should any further claim be made on this country in respect of the South African Constabulary. The £1.000,000 already paid was intended to cover everything, and it was even arranged that if there was a surplus it should not be returned to the Imperial Exchequer. If the South African Constabulary were entitled to the gratuity—and he did not deny that—it ought clearly to be paid out of the money voted by Parliament a year ago, and under these circumstances he moved the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That item, Vote 1, Sub-head H (Gratuities to the Troops for Active Service), be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) confessed that he also was astonished at this claim for gratuities. He agreed that the South African Constabulary deserved gratuities as much as the rest of the troops, but this was an enormous amount. It was almost incredible that they should amount to £10 per man, as they would be according to this Vote, even if the force had not been reduced from the original number asked for—10,000 to 7,000 men. He might mention that the original gratuity for the whole of the troops provided for in the 1902 Estimate only amounted to £350,000, and, therefore, the demand for so large a sum, as was now asked for, for one corps only was quite unintelligible. How did it come that this £100,000 was included in this Estimate? He thought the Committee were entitled to an explanation. If that amount was entirely for the South African Constabulary it was very much too large, or else it was very inaccurately described in the Estimate as "Gratuities to the troops for active service."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER Belfast, W.) thought there was some misconception about the matter. The whole of the sum was not in respect of the Constabulary, but the principal part was for that purpose. The number of men was 10,000, and the average amount of the gratuity per man was £7 10s. The hon. Member for Halifax had asked why this sum had not been added to the £1,000,000. The two had nothing to do with one another. The sum of £1,000,000 was arrived at in respect of the pay and maintenance of the Constabulary. The view the Colonial Administration took was that 6,000 would be adequate, but the Home Government took the view that 10,000 should be maintained. After some correspondence with Lord Milner it was arranged to pay £1,000,000 in respect of these men. The war gratuity was not originally allotted to the Constabulary. It was not originally intended to give it to them, but it was afterwards decided that, in view of the services they had rendered, they should receive it. The hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in saying that the whole of the sum was not for this purpose. He thought £70,000 was for the South African Constabulary and the remainder for gratuities to men in other branches of the service. What the War Office had now to do was to make good their undertaking to pay the gratuity to the South African Constabulary whose claims were coming in from time to time.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) asked the right hon. Gentleman to state the amount of the gratuity per man given to the troops.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he could give the basis on which the gratuities were paid. It was £5 per man to privates, and to all the ranks above them the amounts varied acording to the ranks.

*SIR A. HAYTER said that what they wanted to know was the average figure for each force.

Sir A. Hayter.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said there was no doubt about that. It was £5.

*SIR A. HAYTER said it appeared to him that this sum did not properly come under the Supplementary Estimate. It should be in the main Estimate, because it was really for a new service. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that it was not originally intended to give gratuities to the South African Constabulary, but he supposed that in the intervening period a different resolution was come to. That should have been specifically noted on the Supplementary Estimate. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the whole sum was not for that purpose, but so far as he himself could make out from the figures, four-fifths was for that purpose. This illustrated once more the hand-to-mouth way in which these Estimates were presented to the House of Commons. The Financial Secretary stated the other day that the preceding item, headed "Pay, etc., of the Corps of Imperial Yeomanry (South Africa)," included not only pay but gratuities, and here they were discussing an item which included not only gratuities to the Constabulary but gratuities to the troops on active service. He thought the Committee had a right to know what the purposes were for which they were asked to vote money. It was incumbent on the Department presenting the Estimate to the House to give the fullest and frankest information.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said what had happened was this. The House of Commons had agreed to the principle of paying gratuities, and it was a question for those who had the administration of them to say how they should be given. There was no new principle involved. He entirely demurred when the hon. Baronet said this item was an illustration of the laxness with which the accounts were kept. This was the first time we had had a war carried on with money provided by Estimates. In every previous war the expenditure had been by a Vote of Credit. He believed the attempt which had been made to conduct the recent war by a system of Estimates which the House of Commons could appreciate had been successful. This having been done they were met now with criticism on the smallest points. He admitted that there had been delay in bringing up the accounts, but it was not because the War Office desired that there should be postponement. It was because of the exigencies in connection with the winding up of a great campaign. He thought they might with some advantage forego these minute criticisms of the details of remnants of accounts of three or four years back. The hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to suggest that there had been a sort of *lâche* on his part, or on the part of the Department. The War Office authorities had given their very best attention to the overtaking of the enormous task which had been devolved upon them during the war. They were as competent as the officials of any other Department. They had done what he was quite certain had never been accomplished by the Financial Department of any other War Office in the world.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the right hon. Gentleman had given the Committee an admirable illustration of "the poacher turned gamekeeper." While he sat below the Gangway there was no one fuller of small and cavilling criticisms than the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do honestly say that during the time the war was going on I did not make those criticisms.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that whether it was war time or not they had a duty to perform. The war was over now at last. It was over according to the right hon. Gentleman and his friends a long time ago. The right hon. Gentleman deprecated criticism, and said that all those criticisms were futile and so forth. [AN HON. MEMBER: So they are.] They were, he quite admitted, inconvenient to him. Then the right hon. Gentleman said what an admirable staff the War Office had! He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, but why were they admirable? Because they were always liable to "futile" criticisms on the part of the House of Commons, and if there was any falling off in the financial scrutiny of the public Departments the fault lay with the House of Commons, on account of the House not carrying on its proper function of liberty of criticism in these cases. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that within the last two or three days his hon. friends behind him who had been examining these items had discovered a number of very strange proceedings. The right hon. Gentleman considered that the explanations he had given were satisfactory, but it was the duty of his hon. friends to exercise their functions by making these criticisms. It was the system of close criticism that kept things straight. This new optimistic tone did not come well from the right hon. Gentleman. It was that tone which was more likely to lower the proper administration of public offices than any other.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said the praise bestowed by the Secretary for War on the Financial Department of his Office was rather excessive. It was very easy during a war to make excessive Estimates. He remembered when the South African war was coming to a conclusion the War Department asked something like £30,000,000 to carry on the war, when it was supposed that it would go on for six months. No one could reasonably suppose that on this occasion the War Office had made up the Estimates carefully. The truth was that the War Office went on the system of taking a large margin indeed, but in every case there had had to be Supplementary Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the other day said that the Estimates had invariably been exceeded.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I said exactly the contrary; that the amount spent was under the Estimate.

MR. TREVELYAN said that in this case there was a definite new expenditure which the Committee was not led to expect. He did not know what the reason was why the special gratuities to this corps were omitted in the first instance, and now decided to be given. He supposed it was that the Constabulary were to be given the disagreeable duty of chasing escaped Chinese servants.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had declared that this was the first war that had been conducted under a system of Estimates, and not under a Vote of Credit. The right hon. Gentleman was wrong. It was true that in the case of a small war against a savage country the system of Vote of Credit was used, but it was not in the case of great wars. For instance, in the war with Napoleon there was a Vote of Credit to begin with, but the rest of the war was always carried on on the system of Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman said that this new system, as he thought it to be, was adopted to be in accordance with the views of the House of Commons. He did not think there had been any expression of opinion on the subject in the House of Commons. It was adopted, no doubt with the best intention, to give greater control to the House of Commons over expenditure. But he did not believe that it had had that result. When the Secretary of State for War talked of minute criticism, might he remind the right hon. Gentleman of the circumstance that in the Public Accounts Committee it was avowed by the financial authority of the War Office that, in respect of the expenditure by officers in the field in the way of purchases, they could not tell what that was within a million or two. That seemed to him to show that the system of estimating in advance had been a failure. Perhaps that was because there was no machinery for it. It might be that they wanted an entirely new constitution for their financial arrangements in time of war; and that the Commander-in-Chief should have a sort of double to take charge of the financial arrangements. He though it might be a matter for serious consideration whether when—which God forbid—we came across another big war, the old or the new system should be adopted.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that the hon. Member for King's Lynn had stated that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was wrong when he alleged that this was the first time that the expenses of a war had been provided for by Estimates. Now, the Report for the year 1902 of the Public Accounts Committee, of which the

hon. Gentleman was a member, stated that—

> "In deference to the wishes of the Treasury, the war expenditure has been met for the first time by Estimate, and not by Vote of Credit, and that in attempting to do so, for the better information of Parliament, great latitude must be allowed, both in bringing to account within the proper year, and in estimating in detail for each separate Vote and Sub-head."

That opinion was repeated in the last Report of the Public Accounts Committee, which stated that—

> "In adopting the plan of proceeding by Estimates, and not by Vote of Credit, in deference to the wishes of the Treasury, the War Office must, in the opinion of your Committee, be allowed considerable latitude both in bringing the expenditure to account within the proper year, and in estimating in detail for each separate Vote and Sub-head."

He respectfully suggested that the point raised by the hon. Gentleman was rather small and minute, but if any further explanation was required he would be glad to give it. We were now at the end of the greatest war ever conducted, or attempted to be conducted, under circumstances in which, in the opinion of the Financial Department of the War Office, it could not be conducted, viz., under Estimates. They protested that it was practically impossible to conduct a war on Estimates, but their protest was over-ruled, and for four years the Government had done their best to prove that they were mistaken. This was an absolutely unprecedented war, conducted in unprecedented circumstances, and at an unprecedented distance from this country, at a cost of over £200,000,000, and he asked the Committee to make allowance for some little miscalculation and for small unforeseen expenditure.

Mr. WHITLEY said he could assure the hon. Gentleman that they were trying not to be too hard on the Financial Department of the War Office. He himself had only ventured to utter a word of protest against the way the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had met their endeavour to extract information. It struck him that the right hon. Gentleman had already inherited a great deal of the spirit of his predecessor in the office of Secretary of State for War; and he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the House of Commons was not a "Chinese compound." They had a right to ask for information on these items, and when the Government came down day after day for millions for the public service, they would continue to inquire and to criticise. He did not believe that this was a trifling matter—voting money with both hands, and the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman was not becoming to him. The right hon. Gentleman would get his money faster by adopting a different attitude than that which he had adopted just now. The Secretary for War had said that the war had been conducted for the first time on the system of Estimates; but he agreed with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that a lump sum might have been better than Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman said that the war was over; but last year when these Estimates were framed these items were not brought in as they should have been. Attention had been drawn to three or four consecutive Supplementary Estimates which showed an increase of 1,000 per cent. on the original Estimate. It was due to the Committee that they should have some explanation of that, and sufficient explanation had not been given. He was still of opinion that these items ought never to have been brought in on this Vote at all.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he quite agreed that some latitude ought to be given to the War Office in regard to their Estimates, but there were limits when every Vote one came to, was found to be largely out, not to a small extent, but two or three times the original Estimate. That was going beyond reasonable latitude. If the Estimates were to be drawn in this loose and careless fashion, it would be better to bring in a lump sum. He did not find fault with the Financial Department of the War Office on this occasion, but what he wanted to know was how it was that the Constabulary were now allotted to receive a gratuity? They had been fighting all through the war. Some of them were the first troops to be engaged, and their claims should have been considered earlier. The war had been over eighteen months, and surely it did not take anything like that time to decide who were entitled to gratuities and who were not. That was in the ordinary routine of the War Office business; there was no difficulty in deciding it. It was quite true that these men were paid at a much higher rate than our own soldiers, but so were the Colonials, and surely the War Office could have decided earlier that these men were entitled to gratuities. There was no reason why this item should not have come upon the ordinary Estimates last year. He wanted to know why the decision to give gratuities to the Constabulary had not been come to earlier, and why some part, at least, of these gratuities had not been paid out of the £1,000,000 voted last year.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said that the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken was a very good example of how the time of the House of Commons could be wasted. The hon. Gentleman asked why the troops who were employed the earliest were not paid the earliest.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he did not ask that Question.

MR. MALCOLM said it seemed to be quite immaterial to the hon. Gentleman that the force which was now to be paid was not in existence at the time he supposed it was. He thought the explanation of the Financial Secretary to the War Office was perfectly satisfactory. The hon. Gentleman admitted that there was an oversight at a time of very strenuous work, and he acknowledged it just as "a poacher turned gamekeeper" would acknowledge it. It was no part of his business to defend the War Office; but he did not see that there was any occasion for the present attack. If British infantry or cavalry were being kept out of their gratuities hon. Gentlemen opposite would be the very first to complain about it. It was perfectly reasonable to expect such an oversight as had occurred, during a period of a great war; and if hon. Gentlemen opposite wished the House of Commons to proceed as the Public Accounts Committee advised by way of Estimates instead of by Votes of Credit they were doing their best to prevent it. The House of Commons ought to be protected against such a display of financial pedantry, and it ought to be allowed to proceed with its business. There had been laxity under circumstances of unprecedented difficulty. He thought that the Report of the Public Accounts Committee entirely disposed of the contention of the hon. Gentleman for King's Lynn. The change in procedure which was now adopted was extremely satisfactory, and was a great improvement on the old method. He certainly would support the War Office.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said that he respected the loyalty of the hon. Gentleman to the permanent officials when he indulged in a defence of the Financial Department of the War Office; but the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that that Department was not what it should be, and he added that the remedy which ought to be applied, and which he thought would shortly be applied, was to provide a proper financial staff. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman should not resent hon. Members on that side of the House expressing a similar opinion. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken was altogether mistaken regarding the functions of the House of Commons. He appeared to think that it was improper for hon. Gentlemen to discuss small details. The war cost £250,000,000, but even still they had regard to such a comparatively small sum as £100,000, and they objected to the Vote being brought on at that time of day. As long as these Supplementary Estimates continued to be introduced there would be a feeling that they had not yet got to the end of the job. He was not at all sure that when the right hon. Gentleman submitted the Army Estimates that the House of Commons would not be asked to clear up more accounts. He wished to ask a Question of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the distribution of the gratuities to officers who had served in South Africa. He understood that an officer holding a staff appointment was granted the gratuity of his substantive rank in a case where the staff appointment would only have entitled him to a smaller gratuity. He wished to know whether regimental officers who were given local and temporary rank received similar advantage. For instance, a regimental captain appointed as staff-lieutenant would be entitled to £60 gratuity, whereas a regimental lieutenant appointed to the rank of local captain would only be entitled to £27 10s. That was a great inequality, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would inquire into it.

Sir A. HAYTER said that only £350,000 was taken in last year's Estimates and £3,000 in the Supplementary Estimates for gratuities. He wished to know where the remainder of the money came from.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said the difference was taken out of another Vote.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he thought he could help the hon. Gentleman out of his difficulty. Last year the Secretary of State for War took no less than £2,250,000 for gratuities. He respectfully demurred to the Secretary of State for War denouncing perfectly honest and straightforward criticisms. The criticisms were twofold. In the first place the charge should have been foreseen, and, in the second place, the Estimate was really a new item. The right hon. Gentleman himself had admitted that. He said it was not originally intended to give the South African Constabulary gratuities for military service, but that a decision to the contrary had been arrived at. They had a right to ask on what grounds that decision was arrived at, and why it was not stated on the Estimate that it was a perfectly new charge.

Mr. WHITLEY said that last year the Secretary of State for War took £3,000,000 for gratuities which was spent on other purposes.

Mr. RUNCIMAN asked when the decision was arrived at.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he could not answer the hon. Gentleman's Question about officers' gratuities, but the decision to pay gratuities to the South African Constabulary was arrived at in June, 1902.

Mr. RUNCIMAN asked, if it was arrived at in June, 1902, why it did not appear in last year's Estimates.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had previously explained the matter. The money began to be paid immediately the decision was arrived at, but it could not be all paid in one day. The payment occupied many months. The fact that the money was being paid had nothing to do with the question of accounting, as it could not be brought into account until it had all been checked and regulated. The result was that the money was not brought into account during the year. Under their existing system of finance, money which was actually paid during one year had to be voted the next year. It was a perfectly familiar transaction, and one which took place in every branch of the public service. A large part of the money was spent in 1902. but it was not brought into account during that year, and the money afterwards appropriated for it was spent on other purposes.

MR. RUNCIMAN said he thought the right hon. Gentleman did not quite comprehend his Question. What he referred to was not the appropriation of the money but the estimating of the amount. In June, 1902, the War Office knew that gratuities were to be paid to the South African Constabulary. They also knew the number of men that would receive such gratuities, and he could not understand why they did not put the money down on the Estimates.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the Estimates were made up in October, but the accounts for the previous year did not close until the month of November, and the Estimates had to be made without knowing what accounts might be brought in up to the following October. That, he thought, was the explanation of what seemed to be a very puzzling feature on the face of the accounts.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman met some of the points which had been urged with regard to other items, but it did not at all touch the particular question under discussion. In June, 1902, it was known that these gratuities were going to be paid, and the number of men entitled to receive them, and between June and October there was ample time to place before the House the exact facts of the case. The point of the complaint was not the question of whether the money was to be paid within a particular period, but the fact that, by their not being brought into account in the year, it was taken altogether out of the power of the House to criticise these gratuities. He had come to the conclusion that it was perfectly useless for the House of Commons to attempt to exercise any control over War Office Estimates. He had listened with astonishment when the Financial Secretary stated that the Treasury had insisted that the War Office should make Estimates and not take a Vote on account, and the War Office had declared they were incapable of doing what the Treasury required. When such relations existed between two Departments it was not surprising that these extraordinary Supplementary Estimates should be introduced. The Committee were entitled to some explanation of why the Treasury insisted on the War Office carrying out a financial operation which that Department declared themselves to be incompetent to perform.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the hon. Member had asked why, if it was known that these gratuities would become due, they were not included in the original Estimate. As a matter of fact, a very large sum had already been voted by Parliament for gratuities, and it was not known for many months how much of the £3,000,000 which had been set aside would be required. It was thought that that sum would be ample. Claims for gratuities had been coming in daily for months, but at the time there was no anticipation that the sum available would not be amply sufficient. He did not know why this particular war was made the occasion for trying this new system; nor did he recognise the hon. Member's description of internecine war between the two Departments because the Treasury had insisted on a course which the War Office thought there would be difficulty in following. It was decided to make the experiment—he believed with the entire concurrence of the Public Accounts

Committee, and the experiment had been made with results which were, or were not, satisfactory according to the point of view of hon. Members.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 127; Noes, 184. (Division List No. 18.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Logan, John William
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick, (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk,Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse,Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whitley and Mr. Soares.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col.H.F(Middlesex
Bowles, T.Gibson(King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward

Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E.W.(B'rySEdm'nd
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside.
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H.(Yorks.
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BUCHANAN said he wished to ask a question about item K, "Pay, Wages, etc., of Army Service Corps Subordinate Establishments, £230,000." No information was given in the Estimate, but he had gathered that this was another South African charge. In the last general Estimates they were led to believe that they were voting the nominal charges in time of peace. There had been a large charge for war purposes, and until the other day they believed that the country had returned to the ordinary normal expenditure of the Army. Now they were told that it was necessary to double that charge, and that it was due to further expenditure in South Africa, and to the retention of native employees in connection with military services. He should like to know whether the increased South African charge was in any degree due to the alteration of policy announced in July last as regarded the permanent retention of a much larger force than had been contemplated when the Estimates were introduced by the Secretary of State for India. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head K (Pay, Wages, etc., of Army Service Corps. Subordinate Establishments), be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT explained that this money was paid almost entirely for the building of barracks for the troops in South Africa, to natives and others for carrying materials. The General Officer Commanding must have omitted this charge from his estimate, and it had become necessary to provide it in this way.

MR. BUCHANAN asked if it was likely that next year they would get back to something like the normal charge.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Yes, if the building operations are completed.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) asked if the hon. Member could inform the Committee how many natives were employed on this work, as it would affect the Chinese labour question.

MR. WHITLEY said this money was not only payment for carrying materials, but for the erection of hutments. Had this money been spent strictly in materials or had some of it gone in wages?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT replied it was thought at first that the original estimate included the cost of transport, civilian drivers, and civilian workmen employed on the buildings, but owing to a mistake the estimate did not include those charges and they were obliged to ask for them now.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said it was extraordinary that an item of £230,000 had been omitted by an officer in South Africa, and had not been detected by the War Office.

MR. WHITLEY said that very serious complaints as to the housing of the troops had come from South Africa, and it would give great satisfaction if they could have a clear statement that this work was nearly completed, and that the conditions under which the troops were housed would be very shortly much improved.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the question of the housing of the troops was very important, and he had given much attention to it, but it was hardly one which arose upon this Vote, although if it was in order he was perfectly prepared to go into it.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

*SIR A. HAYTER pointed out that the original Estimate for the Reserves was £680,000 for 80,000 men. The right hon. Gentleman had said there would be a considerable shortage in the Reserve, and he took only £480,000 for 70,000 men, or £200,000 less than the original Estimate. That had the effect of falsifying the amount they had to pay for the Reserves.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER replied that the men had passed into the Reserve earlier than was expected, and the result was an excess. He thought that was a matter for congratulation. The Reserve was short, and he was glad that this increment had taken place.

MR. BUCHANAN said that the item for the China Expeditionary Force was in some respects new, for he would not be liable to the reply from the Treasury Bench that this sum had to do with South African expenditure. In the first place, the respect in which this item bore an unhappy resemblance was that they had this year, as well as last year, an amount almost identically the same as the original Estimate. He ventured to say it did not show very good financial work on the part of the War Office. Referring to the item of £135,000 for "Pay, etc., of the China Expeditionary Force," the hon. Member said the Committee should bear in mind that the Report of the Auditor-General for 1902–3 gave the total amount for that Expedition as £1,807,000. They had not in their possession the Army Appropriation Accounts for the year ending 31st March last, and, therefore, they did not know what had been spent for that year. He thought it would certainly be within the mark to say that considerably over £2,000,000 had been spent on the China Expeditionary Force. The sum now in the the Supplementary Estimate ought to have been foreseen and inserted in the general Estimates of the year. The note at the end of the Supplementary Estimate said—

> "The gross sum of £400,000 is required in connection with the China Expeditionary Force, owing to the accounts for 1902-3 having been received too late to be brought to account in that year. These charges are, however, to the extent of £200,000, met by surplus Appropriations-in-aid, due to arrear receipts in respect of the same period."

He did not think that, together with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War on the opening night of this discussion, was an adequate explanation either of this particular item or of the way these sums of money were charged. This expedition was undertaken by the Indian Army, and the cost was to be paid for, not out of the Indian Exchequer, but out of the Imperial Exchequer. He ventured to say that there was more than a probability that the delay in settling the accounts was much more likely to be due to difficulties here at home than in India. He reminded the Committee that in connection with the Abyssinian Expedition which was carried on by Indian troops, at the cost of the Imperial Government, it was more than twelve years before the Indian Government could get full payment of the money it had expended. He could not see why the Government did not enter an adequate sum in the Estimates last year to meet these claims. The House knew that communications had been constantly going on, in the course of last year, between the home Government and the Indian Government. On 18th March last a military member of the Indian Council stated that a few battalions of the Indian Army were still employed in Northern China at the cost of the home Government, and he added that the administration of the force had been taken over by the War Office. That showed clearly that the home Government must have foreseen that a charge of this sort would come in for payment in the year drawing to a close. Was the present item to be final or not? He would be pleased to find that there was no further sum inserted in the Estimates for the China Expeditionary Force. There were still a number of Indian troops there. Was there to be no charge for them put on the Estimates for the year? He moved to reduce the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head AA (Pay, &c., of the China Expeditionary Force), be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said it was really satisfactory to learn from the hon. Gentleman that the War Office had reduced the period of accounting between the Indian Government and ourselves from twelve to something like two years. The hon. Gentleman had said he did not understand why this account should come in now. He had satisfied himself, and he thought he could satisfy the Committee, that it was not very material. This was an expedition conducted many thousands of miles away. It was conducted under conditions which were quite uncertain at the time. No one knew what the development of the campaign might be, and no one could anticipate the development that took place. An Estimate was made by the War Office of the cost of the expedition. The estimated cost was £6,600,000, and the expenditure had been £6,121,000. The hon. Member had asked why that was so. The answer was very simple. In the early stages of the war the War Office provided for all emergencies and took Estimates in excess of the actual amount that could be expended in that year. There was a very large excess taken in the two years 1900–1 and 1901–2, but the expenditure was not sufficiently quickly brought to account, and considerable sums were returned to the Treasury. The result had been that the sums which were voted as necessary for the expedition and not expended in those years had to be re-voted, and now a portion was to be re-voted this evening. The hon. Member had asked why delay had taken place, and had suggested that because they had had communications with the Indian Government they might have expedited the issue of the accounts. If he remembered rightly, it was the Public Accounts Committee that suggested that the accounts should be audited in India. As a matter of fact, they were not presented at a time when they could be brought within the ordinary Estimates for the year. This was not in the true sense a Supplementary Estimate at all. It was not a payment in excess of the original Estimate for the whole expedition. It was delayed payment. The actual expenditure had been less than the money voted by Parliament. As to the question whether this was a final Estimate, he had to say that it was final with respect to the expedition, but there were still troops in China, and, of course, as long as there were troops there to guard the railway there must be a charge. That would be brought up in the ordinary way, and would be subject to the hon. Member's criticism.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 136; Noes, 187. (Division List No. 19.)

AYES.

Abraham, WilliamCork, N.E.)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Logan, John William
Lundon, W.
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T, (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick, Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W.(Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Ainsworth.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry

Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col.H.F(Middlesex
Bowles, T.Gibson(King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C.W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir RobertPenrose-
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene,Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, RtHn.H(Somers't,E
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col.Chas. W. (Evesham))
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas.Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-ColA.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts).
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir WH.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav, Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he thought it would be unfortunate if this Vote went by default and therefore he moved to reduce it by £100. So far as he could understand these Estimates, this expedition to Somaliland was to cost this year £1,500,000. He wanted to know whether the Secretary for War could inform the Committee what the approximate total cost of this war had been up to the present time, and whether the right hon. Gentleman could offer any guarantee as to the probable length of this war? The whole thing had been a disastrous undertaking to this country. It had been conducted with great loss of life, and no one had been able to understand what the real object of the war was, or whether it would end even if we succeeded in capturing the so-called "Mad Mullah." He did not know whether the Government continued to call that gentleman the "Mad Mullah," but there seemed to be considerable method in his madness. It appeared to him that the War Office regarded this war as a permanent institution; but he hoped the Committee would have some assurance that it would not be continued, and that something would be done to bring it to an end. Would the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of War tell the House of Commons what the Government were going to do with the "Mad Mullah" when they had captured him? What he understood was that this gentleman was a patriot in his own country; that he believed in the Imperialism in his own part of the world; that he objected to invasion and interference by foreigners; and that he did not want immigrants whom he disliked to come into his land by force. Therefore he was called the "Mad Mullah!" In these times of extravagant expenditure, when the resources of the country were being severely taxed, and when the financial outlook was causing great anxiety to thoughtful people, he hoped the Secretary for War would be able to tell the Committee something of interest in regard to this question. He wanted to know, first, the amount which this war had cost up to the present time; second, whether the right hon. Gentleman could make any reasonable estimate—he did not mean a War Office estimate but a real genuine estimate—of how long this war was to be continued; and third, what return this country was to get for this enormous outlay in that wild part of the world.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 1, Sub-head BB (Pay, &c., of the Somaliland Expeditionary Force), be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that it was not a new circumstance in our history that we should have to make such expeditions as this in Somaliland. The Mullah might be a patriot as the hon. Gentleman had said, for all he knew, but this patriot had, on three occasions, raided British territory and put to death those who were under our protection. We were just as much bound, when an armed invader entered the lands of those we had undertaken to protect, to send an expedition against that invader as if his raid had been made upon those under the direct rule of the Crown. This, or any Government, was compelled to drive the invader from the territory of the protectorate, although he might come back. The Government believed that there was now a more favourable chance than ever before of putting an end to these raids and getting rid of the Mullah. The operations up to the present time had cost £3,300,000, and the present Vote would carry them on to the end of the financial year. What would take place after that he could not say. Undoubtedly this was a most critical period, because the grass would be beginning to grow a little later, and the circumstances which controlled the operations of the enemy would cease to control him. He thought that they might feel sanguine that the efforts which were being made by our troops would be crowned with a measure of success. The only question now was whether hon. Gentlemen desired that the Government should bring those operations to a close before they had made certain that the tribes for whose protection the Government was responsible, would be no longer liable to such incursions.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that there had been recently rather disquieting news from Somaliland with reference to the retirement of General Egerton. He hoped that the Committee would have an assurance from the Secretary of State that the campaign would be brought to a close, and that it would not be like the Dutch campaign in Sumatra, which had been going on for thirty years. He should like an assurance as to what the proposals for the future were. If the present operations were not successful, were they to be continued indefinitely at enormous expenditure? Last year they were told that no further operations would be undertaken; but as soon as the House rose a fresh expedition was started. He did not express any opinion as to whether that expedition should have been undertaken or not, but there were two points which were very unwisely carried out. In the first place there was a large importation of Indian camels into Somaliland which were not suited by the climate and which died like flies. Secondly native levies under British officers were employed after a considerable sum had been spent on their training, but the moment the first shot was fired they all bolted leaving the officers in a position of great danger. He wished to know whether that practice would be stopped, and also whether the House would be consulted before any larger operations were undertaken.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the Secretary of State seemed surprised at the Committee being taken aback by this Supplementary Estimate. But surely it was not surprising, considering the original Estimate was only £250,000, and that the Supplementary Estimate now asked for amounted to £1,600,000. The Secretary of State said that when British territory was invaded it was the duty of this country to drive out the enemy. As a general principle they all agreed to that; but he wished to ask whether the Secretary of State thought that the Government or the House of Commons would have undertaken to drive out the Mullah if they had known it would lead to such enormous expenditure and such great loss of life. That was a question which met with the highfaluting of the Secretary of State. Now that they were in it they would have to go through with it. The original criticism on the expedition, that it was like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay, had unfortunately been justified. The Mullah had only to retreat and it was most unlikely that he would be brought to book. The only satisfaction which the Secretary of State was likely to get was that the war would be like the Dutch war in Sumatra which had been in progress for fifty years. This was one of the cases in which the cost had not been counted before the expedition was entered upon, and it was clear that there was a great deal of miscalculation and muddle in connection with it.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that the Secretary of State had put altogether too high the doctrine of British territory in a matter of this kind. Immediately before the war began this was an India Office occupation on the coast in order to promote trade with Aden. Then the India Office handed it over to the Foreign Office, who in turn handed it over to the War Office to carry on the war. The Secretary of State spoke as if the country was a portion of British territory as is India. Nothing of the kind. We had never been in the country. There were no magistrates, no residents, and no British officials in it. It was a desert country where we had never been. At present there were no frontiers, but ultimately no doubt they would be drawn, and possibly the territory the Committee was now discussing would be handed over to someone else as a vast neighbouring territory of the same kind had been handed by us to Abyssinia. To speak of such a territory which they had merely taken by colouring it red on the map, as British territory in the sense in which the United Kingdom or India was British territory was simply misleading the House of Commons. The moral of the whole thing was that the House should be a little more careful than they had been in former times, in the matter of pegging out claims.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had not put the question as one of territory at all. It was a question of treaty obligations. It was perfectly open to the House on a proper occasion to discuss whether the Government ought to have entered into those treaties or not, but, having entered into them for the protection of life and property for our own purposes, he held, although the opinion might be regarded as heretical by hon. Gentlemen opposite, that they were bound to give effect to them. The hon. Member for Poplar asked whether the Government would have entered on this expedition had they known what would happen. If a war for the protection of life and property was justifiable, the question of cost ought not to decide whether it should be undertaken or not. If it were right to go to war to protect those to whose protection this country was pledged, then the question of money did not in his opinion enter primarily into account.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I ought to remind the Committee that the policy of entering upon this expedition is not open to discussion now. The future policy and the conduct of the operations are quite open to criticism.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said he was very much struck by the answer which the Secretary of State gave to the Question which had been asked him as to how long he expected the war would last. The right hon. Gentlemen said he could not say, and justified his answer by reference to the length of the South African campaign. The Irish Members had every reason to protest against the Vote, and he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman who moved the reduction did not move the omission of the total amount. There was no necessity for this campaign, and there was no question of defending British territory. Up to the present this campaign had cost £1,800,000, and the right hon. Gentleman had had to admit that no satisfactory result had been achieved. The "Mad Mullah" was said to have been turned out of the territory. If that was so, why did they not keep him where they had him? He strongly protested against the expenditure, because Ireland was already heavily taxed for wars in which she had absolutely no interest and with which she had no sympathy. Last night when a reasonable request was made for money for Ireland, the reply of the Treasury was that they had no money, and yet these large sums could be provided without the slightest prospect of any benefit accruing. Of all the expeditions ever undertaken by Great Britain this was one of the most shocking. He hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a division in order that an opportunity might be given of protesting against an expedition which was unnecessary and a Vote which could not be explained.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he could not vote for the Amendment as this was a matter which must be left to the responsibility of Ministers, and if the House of Commons was so advised as to keep in power Ministers who undertook expeditions which ought not to be undertaken, they should be prepared to vote the necessary Estimates. He desired to press on the Committee, however, that this was one of a series of small wars, which, in his opinion, ought to and could have been avoided. It was this kind of subsidiary expenditure which went largely to swell the enormous Estimates with which the House had to deal. The case for the Somaliland War—it had ceased to be an expedition—was a very bad one. He had never been able to comprehend the object for which it was being waged. Our original strip of territory was quite enough for us in that wretched locality, and for some years it was administered with considerable success. The Somalis were an easily governed people. Sufficient reason had not been shown for carrying fire and sword amongst them. All sorts of assurances of an encouraging character had been given with regard to the war, but they had all been falsified. He attributed the outbreak to the much too great independence allowed, especially to military gentlemen, in the districts concerned. These gentlemen, being anxious for distinction and promotion, were much too apt to engage this country in matters which led to these costly wars. What was to be done with the Mullah if he were caught? It would have been much better to have allowed him to run loose in his own part of the country. He earnestly hoped that some assurance would be given that this was the last sum the Committee would be ask to vote in the matter. If, however, as he understood, this was merely to carry matters on until 31st March, and that another £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 would be asked for next year, it opened up a most distressing vista. He warned the Government against the beginning of strife in respect of these wars, which started in a small way, but ended by costing millions of money and thousands of lives, and led to no adequate results.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who had asked for an assurance that no more money would be asked for, could not have been in the House when the Secretary of State declared that the war must be carried through no matter how much it cost. In these circumstances the Committee ought to have a clear understanding as to what they were fighting for. If there was a possibility of spending £100,000,000 he wanted to know under what conditions they were going to make peace. Were they to go on pursuing the Mullah until they caught him? Whenever we quarrelled with any of these tribes, we, in order to bring to them the blessings of Christianity, sent out an expedition to burn down their houses, and to destroy all we possibly could; and then, having mowed down the natives with our machine guns, we thanked God we were superior to them. There was no use in continuing these operations. If the Mullah was really caught another would arise. Nobody could show the slightest possibility of any benefit accruing from this expenditure of this money, and therefore he should gladly vote for the Amendment.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) said if the Government embarked upon an expedition of this kind this country ought to pay for it, and he did not see why Ireland should be called upon to contribute any share for this expedition to Somaliland. Last night a claim was made for £3,000 for technical education in Ireland, and it was treated in the spirit in which the Treasury always treated claims of a practical character from Ireland. Now £1,800,000 was to be expended upon hunting the Mad Mullah of whose future peregrinations they had no assurance. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had asked what was to be done with the Mullah when he was caught. Might he suggest that he should be made President of the Tariff Commission or found a seat upon the Treasury Bench. This was a useless expenditure because the Mad Mullah was simply a religious enthusiast and that was no reason why he should be pursued at a cost to the taxpayers of £1,800,000. There were religious zealots in this House but they did not spend any money in pursuing them. It was scandalous that such a sum of money should be taken from the British Treasury when there was so much need for social reform and for more generous treatment towards Ireland in matters like technical education. He entirely associated himself with the hon. Member for Galway, in protesting, against this outrageous expenditure and against the refusal of the Government to grant the small demand of Ireland in regard to technical education.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said it was desirable that some responsible member of the Government should tell the House what was their policy in Somaliland. The South African War and its results proved that without a definite policy confusion and loss were certain to follow. It was impossible to see the end of this expedition. What was it intended for? This Vote was no criterion as to the further amounts the House would be asked for, and he sincerely hoped that before the House voted on the matter some undertaking would be given as to what the Government had in view.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he shared the distinction of opposing the Somaliland expedition for the last five or six years both by speech and vote. In the early days of this expedition he remembered both the hon. Member for Northampton and himself being gibed and jeered at by hon. Members opposite. It was suggested that they were unpatriotic and not touched with the new Imperialism, and it was said that they were not alive to the true interests of the British Empire. He claimed that they had been more prescient than those who jeered at them, and to-night he was using the same arguments against this expedition as he had urged before. He contended that the Mullah had the right, as a religious zealot and a tribal chief, to exercise what rights he thought he had and to contend for them with other men of similar ambitions and views. It was not our business to go to the four corners of the earth adjusting religious differences between Buddhist passive resisters and high Churchmen there. The Mullah was a sort of fiscal reformer on the ramp whose authority was disputed, but the fact that he held those views was no reason why this country should do what had been done in Somaliland. See how appetite grows on what it feeds upon. The sum of £80,000 was the amount of the original Estimate for this expedition, and it grew from that to £250,000. Now they found that it had become £1,800,000, and if they continued Mullah hunting he believed the total would be nearer £5,000,000. He wished to take time by the forelock, and he protested against a continuation of this expenditure. There was an impression that these expeditions benefited trade, but there was not a greater illusion. The idea that they could extend trade in this way was a ridiculous one. The man who had done most to kill British trade in Africa was Mr. H. M. Stanley, whom the Government had imitated. They ought to do all they could to develop trade routes, but they should not interefere with tribal customs. They ought to let those tribes have their rows on religious matters just as they did in Belfast and other parts of the British Empire. If they broke each others heads it was only only a way they had got, but if they thought they were going to benefit trade by pursuing the Mullah all over the place they were very much mistaken. Ireland had just asked for £3,000 as a grant towards technical education. Not long ago men were running up and down the country telling us that the time for economy had arrived, that we were a dying race with languishing industries and disappearing trade, and we were told that we must go into competition with the world with new commercial ideas. The policy of the Government was like the policy initiated by Solomon 4,000 years ago, and was correctly described in the words "The eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth." He did not object to hon. Members paying for their foreign policy out of their own purses, but he did object to the East Coast of Africa being made a sort of enlarged Salisbury Plain, about 1,000 miles long and 70 miles broad, on which our men were sent in a hopeless quest after a religious will-o'-the-wisp who was continually dragging them into difficulties, dangers misery, and suffering, with an objective which did not warrant or justify the policy of the Government in any sense whatever. When they heard so much cheap sympathy expressed for the unemployed he contended that this £2,000,000 would have been better spent on harbours of refuge around the Irish or Scotch Coast or in establishing Charlottenburg schools in different parts of this country. If this Government remained in office they would be told the same thing next year, and the answer would be, "This man must be suppressed." There was no particular evidence that the Mullah had done any great harm; it might be said that he made people slaves, but it did not lie in the mouth of this Government to accuse a wild native religious zealot of treating people badly or of making other people slaves, because the Government had done it themselves and were continuing to do it. Those tribal wars and military expeditions conducted and started mainly when the House of Commons was not in session were not only a scandal to their name but they broke the tradition they professed of treating inferior races kindly, and they involved this country in tremendous expense and a great waste of money. He appealed to the Secretary of State for War to withdraw the troops from this expedition in which there was no honour, glory, or credit. When the right hon. Gentleman was reorganising the Army he might with the money which was being thrown away on this expedition be able to do something better for Tommy Atkins. He protested against the wicked expenditure of money on wanton expeditions.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon) thought it was a great pity that language of exaggeration was used in regard to this matter. He was sure that a plain statement of the facts of the case would be sufficient to show how serious was the position we were in in Somaliland, and he was satisfied nobody in that House regretted more than His Majesty's Ministers the size which this expedition had now unfortunately assumed. Notwithstanding what the Secretary for War had said in regard to our responsibilities, he did not believe that His Majesty's Ministers would have entered upon an expedition of this kind if they had dreamt for a moment that it was going to reach its present size. He did not quite agree with his right hon. friend the Secretary for War when he assumed that it was the duty of the Government to enter upon such expeditions as this over such a vast expanse of territory, involving such an enormous outlay of money and loss of life, with regard to every portion of territory which was assumed to be more or less under our protectorate. He thought that was putting it much to high. It was a great pity, he thought, that we should enter as freely as we did on obligations of that kind. He was satisfied that it was very largely true that we ought, as far as possible, to confine our responsibilities to the sea-coast, and not endeavour to undertake obligations in the trackless desert as in this case. The position was not really quite as his right hon. friend suggested, that there was a large number of people under our protection who had been raided and massacred. His recollection was that a large portion of the inhabitants of this territory were rather in sympathy with the Mullah than with us. It was understood when this expedition was entered upon, that we were to drive the Mullah from certain territory which was of service to his cattle and followers, and that having done that we should consider our responsibilities at an end, retire then to our own territory, and endeavour subsequently, by the extension of trade routes, and perhaps of railways, to extend our peaceful influence and so counteract the effect of the Mullah's movements. But he quite saw the original intention, against the will of the Government, had had to be abandoned, and they had had to go further and further in this matter, much beyond what they at one time anticipated. That was the danger of these expeditions, we never could tell when we entered on a small expedition how far we should be drawn on. He quite acknowledged that we could not leave this territory now without inflicting considerable damage on the Mullah. We had inflicted considerable damage already, he understood; and he thought they ought to ask the Government to define to the House what was to be the limit of the expedition to which we were committed. He was rather alarmed at some expressions which fell from his right hon. friend, who seemed to assume that this expedition might possibly go on indefinitely. He did not think that would be satisfactory to the House or the country; and they ought to hear from the Government whether, after having inflicted considerable injury on the Mullah, as we had done, and shown that we were not disposed to accept the situation which was created, a period would be put to this expedition. It would be satisfactory to know that at some not remote period they might look forward to the termination of this very great expense.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he was rather astonished at the speech of his right hon. friend. There had been two definite appeals to the Government from the people under our protection. His right hon. friend agreed to the sending of the first expedition, which was successful in driving the Mullah out of our protectorate. The blow, however, was not a severe one, and the Mullah commenced to raid again. His right hon. friend approved of the second expedition, and that expedition suffered very serious defeat. Was that the time when we ought to have retired?

MR. RITCHIE: Certainly not.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said they then undertook a third expedition, which was now, he hoped, in process of coming to a fortunate conclusion. [AN HON. MEMBER: What is it going to do?] His right hon. friend suggested that they ought to have brought the expedition to an end at some other period——

MR. RITCHIE said the right hon. Gentleman must really not misinterpret him. He had never disputed the fact that he, along with his colleagues, was responsible for entering upon this expedition; he never disputed the fact that the Government had been driven, necessarily, and very much against their will, far beyond what they originally intended, and that they had no option but to go on. The question he had asked was what was the limit to the expedition which the Government anticipated; because his right hon. friend, in some of his remarks, had seemed to assume that it might go on indefinitely. He had never denied his responsibility, or the duty of the Government to go on with it, although he deplored it, as he believed the Government did.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he was very glad then to find that they were entirely in agreement. He certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to have suggested that they ought to have stopped the operations.

Mr. RITCHIE : No.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said they were agreed that the Government had been justified in carrying out the expeditions. He supposed there was no section in that House to whom the necessity of continuing this campaign was more unpalatable than to the Government. It was obvious to everybody concerned, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, that there was no glory or profit in the campaign. As to what was the policy of the Government with regard to Somaliland, he thought it was a matter of plain common sense. The policy of the Government was, and must be, that of anybody else in their position; they were now carrying on this campaign with some anticipation of a favourable result; they hoped to produce such an impression by the disorganisation of the forces of the Mullah as to make it sure that we should not be exposed a fourth time to a recurrence of these attacks. He could not for the life of him understand what was the other point in the operations at which hon. Members recommended they should stop. His right hon. friend did not suggest that they should have stopped when we were defeated; he did not suggest that they should stop now when we had a chance of success. The point, of course, at which they should stop would be when we had achieved success, and secured the safety of those for whom we were responsible. [Cries of "Who are they?"] They were practically the whole of the coast tribes along the northern edge of Somaliland. It would be futile on his part to state an exact time when the operations ought to stop, or when they hoped to achieve success. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Battersea that his reference to Holy Writ was at all relevant in this matter. He thought it would be a bad day for the British Empire when one took the hon. Member's advice.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he did not think the Government could be surprised at this debate. This war had been going on for more than two years. The original Estimate was £250,000, and a great deal of money had been spent since. Now they were presented with a bill for £1,600,000, and according to the Secretary of State for War there was "some anticipation of a favourable result." Did anybody in this House suppose that if the Government had had any idea what the course of the war was going to be they would have entered upon it? And, indeed, there need never have been any war at all but for the mismanagement of the people on the spot. What made the present case so inexcusable was that we had had so many examples in the past of similar wars. We had had protectorate wars on the north-west frontier of India. Wars like the present one had occurred over and over again, in which enormous sums of money had been spent. How long was this war to go on? Would Estimate after Estimate be presented to the House as long as the Mullah was able to keep the field and threaten fresh raids? It must come to an end; and was it not the part of good sense to endeavour to bring it to an end as soon as they possibly could? Was it not a reasonable policy for the Government to make up their mind and let their officials and their generals know that they would not continue this wild chase of the Mullah from oasis to oasis, and that if they did not succeed in catching him in the present trap, these costly expeditions would be abandoned and subsidiary methods, which have been found so useful on the north-west frontier of India, would be adopted to repel the raids of this nimble and active enemy? He believed that the debate would not be futile if it could make the Government realise that these expeditions were useless. It was not from any Party spirit that they desired the Government to change their policy, and put an end once for all to these sources of expenditure.

Mr. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) said he wished to ask whether the Mullah or his friends had made any suggestion, direct or indirect, to our officers in the field of negotiating in any way to bring this war to an end. Was there any chance of our securing the services of any man out in Somaliland who had influence with the Mullah to induce him to come to reasonable terms of peace?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that on previous occasions he had entered his protest against the whole of the expenditure entailed by this expedition. At the outset he desired to say that when they were dealing with a matter of this kind, which involved the expenditure of millions of the taxpayers' money, they ought not to be treated to any exhibition either of heat or temper from the new Secretary for War. The Irish Members were accustomed to have their protests derided and their actions misrepresented; but he thought it was a new departure for the Secretary of War to rise and with some passion to find fault, not with an Irish Member at all, but with the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer because he ventured to express views not on all-fours with those he entertained. They were at least entitled to have courtesy and not temper displayed in discussions of this kind; and he warned the Minister for War that they were only at the commencement of the session, that the right hon. Gentleman had a great deal of work to get through in connection with his Army Estimates, and that, if they were to have displays of temper, he promised the right hon. Gentleman most faithfully that the discussions of Army affairs would be protracted. He was himself naturally by temperament most peaceably disposed, and it was not very easy to irritate him; but one of the things which did irritate him was, when discussing a question like this, if they were not treated with that calmness of demeanour which certainly ought to characterise a highly placed and not badly paid official. He complained that there seemed to be no settled plan of campaign in reference to this expedition; and he emphasised the fact that whereas when the House was asked in 1901 for a Vote of £200,000, and it was said that that amount might possibly be the last demanded, now they made a demand which ran into millions, and were apparently just as far off seeing the end of this expedition as ever. From the Irish point of view expenditure of this kind was simply and absolutely intolerable. He defied any member of the Government to say how, in any way, England could possibly gain either in prestige, commerce, or reputation, from an expedition of this kind; but, whatever England had to gain, they knew perfectly well that, as far as Ireland was concerned, they had absolutely nothing to gain, though he supposed they would have to pay, in the usual course, their share of the expenditure. England might have a vendetta against the Mullah and might have made up its mind, for the welfare and stability of the Empire, that he should be hunted down; but Ireland had no quarrel of the kind or any serious interest in the matter; and he put it, as man to man, if he were not justified, representing thousands of farmers and poor agricultural labourers in Ireland, in protesting in their names against the expenditure of millions of money in a wild-goose chase in Africa which could bring no credit or honour to England and certainly no good to Ireland. Sometimes the Irish Members were derided because they were not more content and more temperate in their language and more patient. But he was surprised that, in face of the provocation they received in matters of this kind, they maintained the patience they had exhibited from time to time. It was an unfair, an unjust, and a monstrous thing that Ireland should be directly or indirectly charged a single shilling for this expedition. He freely admitted that, as far as he knew the merits of the quarrel, his sympathies were with this unfortunate African native who was being hunted down; but if the Government would undertake that a reduction should be made in respect of Ireland and that it should not be called upon to bear any part of the cost of this war, he would, in spite of his sympathies, let them have the Vote of money without protest. So long, however, as Ireland was charged with any proportion of the cost, they were entitled to make their protest.

Almost nightly since the session began they had had proof upon proof piled up of the unfair way Ireland was financially treated. They asked for money for educational purposes to improve the industrial life of the country; they had asked—he had done so over and over again, almost humiliating himself—for money in order to improve their coast line and especially their miserable harbours; but they found it almost impossible to get any liberal response to their demands, and yet they were asked to come down without demur and vote hundreds of thousands of pounds for the purpose of hunting the Mullah in Somaliland. All he could say was that he would give himself the consolation—a poor one though it was—of protesting as strongly as he could; and the Government certainly should not get the Vote until he told them all he thought about it. They wondered often why the Irish people were not as loyal as other peoples in the Empire to the English connection, and why the Army and Navy were not popular in Ireland. The reason would be found in Votes such as that they were now considering. How could they expect people who did not get the use of a gunboat to protect their fisheries, to exhibit enthusiasm for an expedition such as this. The expedition was making England the laughing-stock of the world. If they wanted to break the power of the Mullah permanently and effectively why did not the Government make their arrangements accordingly? Why did they continue to dribble out small bodies of troops which were cut to pieces by the overwhelming numbers arrayed against them? It was one of the most disgraceful, most lamentable, and most discreditable chapters in the recent history of this country, that brave soldiers and devoted men should be sent on expeditions for which they were not in the slightest degree equipped. Quite recently a number of gallant officers were simply overwhelmed by superior numbers, and their lives were sacrificed to the blundering and bungling of the War Office. That was not the way to conduct an expedition of this kind. If the Government made up their minds to crush the Mullah they should have come to Parliament and said, "This is going to be an expenditure of millions of money, it will take a considerable time, we will have to send a large force; will you allow us to do it." Instead of doing that the Government were simply trifling with the question, and when a disaster occurred they simply said they had not calculated the strength of the Mullah and they wanted a little more money and a few more men. Then another disaster occurred, and more men and money were asked for. But even now the Government were unable to say whether there was any prospect of an end being put to those operations. That was not the proper way to conduct such a business. The Government should in the first instance have issued a Blue-book setting forth all the circumstances and stating what they intended to do, and they could then have asked Parliament to sanction the expedition. Instead of that the expedition was entered upon without hon. Members being given an opportunity to vote Aye or No. All they were asked to do was, when blundering and incapacity was shown and when there was disaster and loss of life, to vote millions of money.

At the beginning of the campaign the then Secretary of State for War said that the Mullah was mad, and that he would be very soon overcome and made to realise the enormity of his offence in endeavouring to defend his own country. Then followed news of about six or seven British officers being slaughtered, and then it was discovered that the Mullah was not quite so mad as had been imagined, and more money was asked for. Now the Committee was asked to believe that this war had been entered on in order to keep faith with certain tribes. Was there ever a more monstrous proposition than that British and Irish taxpayers should be asked to spend millions of money in order that war might be waged against a native chief who had incurred the enmity of other native chiefs. He was rather amused when he heard the Secretary of State say that after all there was some slight prospect of those operations being successful. That was not a very sanguine view nor one which would encourage the House of Commons to sanction the continuance of this expedition. He supposed that the right hon. Gentlemen based his assumption on the statement he made that the Mullah had become somewhat depressed. He himself did not know whether the Mullah was depressed or not at the present time; neither did he care; but if it was possible for the Mullah to know that the right hon. Gentleman was in charge of the military arrangements of this country, so far from depressing him the knowledge would encourage him, because the general consensus of opinion was that bad as the late Secretary of State had been, the present Gentleman from Belfast was in all probability a great deal worse. The first thing necessary for the country, if it wished to be successful in military expeditions, was to put its military affairs into the hands of competent and able men who knew their business, men who would be able to give an adequate statement to the House, and men who, above all, would be able to keep their tempers. He protested, as a private Member, against the exhibition of temper on the part of the Secretary of State when the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer had the audacity not to agree with him. They were coming to a pretty pass when it was not sufficient that a prominent member of the Government should leave the Treasury Bench and sit below the Gangway, but that he should be expected never to say a word in opposition to the darlings of the gods, who were now on the Treasury Bench. As far as he was concerned he was in this enviable position, that he had never been in a Cabinet.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, That the Question be now put.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to give notice that I will make the Government pay for this over and over again.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 204; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 20.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W(Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R.(TowerHamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R.(Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, RtHn H(Somers't,E
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)

Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, ArthurH. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Hebt. Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, HC(North'mb Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Wn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham,William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell(Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb.John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir A. D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Stevenson,Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John

Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Voxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 138; Noes, 208. (Division List No. 21.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbt. Henry
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie. John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith. Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
McArthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Kean, John
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas, M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Fred. W.(Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. John Burns.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Fredrick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James

Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R.(TowerHamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G H.
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E.W(B'ryS Edm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray Sir Robert Gray C
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G.(Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said he desired to draw attention to Sub-head B, "Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad, £300,000." On referring to the original Estimate he found that it was only for £115,000.

Therefore, he could not understand how it came about that a Supplementary Estimate of £300,000, which was more than double the original Estimate, was now being asked for. Surely they ought to get nearer in their Estimates than that. He should like to have some explanation from the Secretary of State for War as to why this Estimate was so large. He remembered last year the Government asked for £5,000,000 for transport of troops and remounts, but they had not been spending the money on remounts this year, and he should like an explanation as to how this Estimate had grown so large.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he did not know whether his hon. friend intended to mark his disapproval of this Estimate by moving a reduction, but if he did not he should certainly do so himself. It was a most inconvenient and a most disrespectful thing, nearly as disrespectful as moving the closure, that a man who had as good a right to speak as any member of the Government should be closured without a single word of explanation of a satisfactory character in regard to huge Supplementary Estimates like this. He held the opinion that this system of Supplementary Estimates was unsatisfactory and undesirable altogether. He did not know why it was not possible to make proper Estimates, and have them discussed in the ordinary way, instead of coming down to ask for £2,700,000. That was not the way to conduct the affairs of the country, and he doubted if the Secretary for War could defend a proposition of that kind. He was very much afraid that a great many of these Supplementary Estimates were suddenly sprung upon Parliament in the hope that they might somehow or other get quietly through without raising any particular discussion, or bring any large amount of criticism to bear upon them. He asked for an explanation as to why this enormous sum was being asked for. He had been in the House for a longer time than the Secretary of State for War, who was now a member of the Cabinet, but he would not take the amount of this Estimate to join the present Cabinet, because, after all, one must draw the line somewhere. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to make inquiries, and he would find that it was not usual to propose Supplementary Estimates for such enormous sums without some explanation. The system seemed to have grown of putting on Supplementary Votes items which must have been anticipated when the ordinary Estimates were framed, and therefore they were entitled to some explanation. The way to get these Estimates through, and to occupy only a reasonable time with them, was to have a little patience.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. Member now addressing himself to the whole Vote?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was addressing himself to Vote 6, Item B, relating to Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. Member to confine his remarks to that item. I am afraid he has been wandering a great deal beyond that.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that perhaps the most concise way in which he could bring his attention and the attention of the House to this particular item of £300,000 was to move a reduction of £100,000. Matters would be facilitated if there was a little more patience and the closure was not used in an offensive way.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to reflect upon the action of the Committee. The closure is not the action of a particular Member but the action of the Committee.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was not reflecting on the Chairman's discretion in accepting the closure nor upon the action of the House, but he referred to the individual action of one hon. Gentleman.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to do that. It is a well-known Rule of the House, which has been laid down over and over again, that when once the House has decided upon the closure no Member is entitled to go back and reflect upon the action of the House or upon the Member who has moved the closure. [An Hon. Member: We will fight it every time it comes up.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head B (Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad), be reduced by £100,000."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that a very large porton of this Estimate came under the same explanation that he had given before, for it had to do with the charges for the conveyance of building material in South Africa, which, owing to a mistake, had been omitted from the original Estimate. About half of the items for land transport abroad was for the conveyance of building materials, and the other was mainly due to the large quantity of stores that had to be moved about.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said there had already been a little omission of £200,000 in the original Estimate, and here was another little item of £300,000 which had also been overlooked. This was another item which their officers in South Africa had forgotten and which could not be included in the original Estimates, because the War Office did not find it out. It was almost futile to discuss an Estimate of this kind.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) wanted to know at what rate these materials had been conveyed. The amount charged was very large indeed. It was brought out during the war that the rate was one-third of a penny per mile and it was subsequently reduced to one-fourth of a penny per mile.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

The Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army Services, viz:—

Vote 1, Pay, &c., of the Army	£2,000,000
Vote 6, Transport and Remounts	£2,100,000
Vote 7, Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies . .	£2,030,000
Total	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) .	£3,430,000
	£2,700,000

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he understood an Amendment had been moved to reduce the Vote by £100,000.

*The CHAIRMAN said an Amendment always dropped when progress was reported.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said in that case he should move the reduction of the Vote by £10,000 in respect of the item for Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head B (Land and Inland Water Transport Abroad), be reduced by £10,000."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT stated that he had already said everything he could say in regard to this

Vote. He had endeavoured to explain why it was necessary for the Government to bring forward a Supplementary Estimate.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 74; Noes, 88. (Division List No. 22.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt Hon Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R C. Munro (Leith
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos F. (Accrington)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Whitley.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kerr, John
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Milvain, Thomas
Morrell, George Herbert
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Richards, Henry Charles
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wylie, Alexander

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said he was emboldened by the result of the last division and from a sense of duty to continue the examination of the Estimates now before the Committee. He hoped that on every possible occasion hon.

Members would by their votes mark their protest against the recklessness and improvidence of the expenditure indicated by the present Estimates. He remembered when a Supplementary Estimate was a most unusual thing, but now almost every item of the original Estimates was exceeded. Why was such a large sum as £60,000 required for Sea Transport in time of peace? What was the charter price of the vessels, what was the number of men, and what was the quantity of material conveyed? The Financial Secretary to the War Office had admitted that he could not explain these things because he was new to the office he held. Child as the hon. Gentleman was in these matters, he hoped he would be able to give the Committee a satisfactory explanation why such a large sum was required in addition to the original Estimate. These excess charges were occurring in almost every branch of the service, and when Supplementary Estimates were presented the Government carried them by an automatic majority of Members who flocked in from the smoking room when the divisions were called. He moved to reduce the Vote by £10,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head C (Sea Transport), be reduced by £10,000."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) said he could not agree with the hon. Member that £60,000 was a large amount for Sea Transport, having regard to the conditions of sea transport. He could understand that this amount might be justified. At the same time he was willing to admit that sea transport was a subject that lent itself to an infinite variety of treatment. It would have been very much better if the item had been more accurately described, and if the countries from which the transport was carried out had been specified on the Estimate. He asked the Financial Secretary to state from what portion of the British Empire the sea transport took place, because, unless the Committee got some particular information, it was evident that they might occupy the whole evening discussing the places from which sea transport might take place. Between what ports did the steamers sail, and at what prices were they chartered. He should like to lay considerable emphasis on that point. He wished especially to know at what rates the vessels were chartered seeing that the freight market was in a more or less depressed condition at the present moment. If no satisfactory information on these points was forthcoming, the words "Sea Transport" lent themselves to great prolixity.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he was very glad to be able to satisfy his hon. friend. All the sea transport was from South Africa. The Supplementary Estimate became necessary because, as he had already explained, the moving home of a number of troops had been deferred to a later period than was originally intended.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR: Can my hon. friend give the rate per net or gross registered tonnage?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I am sorry I cannot.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 85; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 23.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry

Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo. S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt.Hn.CR(Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Flynn and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton,Marq.of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir JohnH.
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. FLYNN said that they had got no account whatever from the Secretary for War as to whether this Vote included the cost of the expedition to Tibet.

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is a Vote for the China Expeditionary Force alone.

Mr. FLYNN said he intended to give a geographical account of Tibet, but, of course, he would not go on that line of route if it was irrelevant. What he wanted to know was the reason for the enormous discrepancy between the original Estimate and the present one. The Committee was entitled to a full and satisfactory explanation from the Secretary of State for War or from the Financial Secretary to the War Office. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £10,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head E (China Expeditionary Force, Transport and Remounts), be reduced by £10,000."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Mr. O'MARA said that, in seconding the Motion, he wished to express his amazement at the carelessness with which this Estimate had been drawn up. Instead of the Estimates being introduced in a proper and business-like way, they were asked to vote in a hurried way, with the closure applied, these large sums. That was reducing the control of the House of Commons over expenditure to a farce. Under Appropriation in aid, under the same Sub-head, there was an item, "Proceeds of sale of horses, and other cast animals, £1,000,000." Had these accounts come in yet? The War Office must really know how much the rubbish of this Expedition had realised. Had it realised exactly £1,000,000?

*The CHAIRMAN said that the Appropriation in aid did not arise on this item. It had nothing to do with the China Expeditionary Force. The deduction referred to by the hon. Member did not come under Sub-head E, but Sub-head G, of the Appropriation Vote. The misprint of E for G was obvious.

Mr. O'MARA said that the Committee were not responsible for the printing of the Estimates. It was a monstrous way to put the business of the country before the House, because it led to great misunderstanding. The consideration of these Estimates ought to be postponed to allow the War Office to put a proper Paper before hon. Members. A Department which had the spending of £30,000,000, or £40,000,000 surely ought to have a clerk to read the proofs of the Papers before they were submitted to the House. It was scandalous the way in which information was given to the Committee, and the manner in which these different items were mixed up was another proof of the utter inefficiency of the War Office.

Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.) moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again;" but the Chairman, being of opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

Question again proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head E (China Expeditionary Force, Transport and Remounts), be reduced by £10,000."

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) asked if it was open to move the Adjournment in order to give hon. Members an opportunity to see a correct Paper?

*The CHAIRMAN: It is also open to the Chair to refuse to accept such a Motion.

Mr. O'MARA asked, on a point of order, how they could continue the debate on an incorrect Paper.

*The CHAIRMAN said that the mistake did not signify, and the hon. Member was not misled. He would not be entitled to refer to the Appropriation in aid when the China Expeditionary Force was under discussion.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN said that the Supplementary Estimate was double the original, so that evidently the latter was absolutely misleading. Who made out the Estimates? Was it the Minister in charge of the Department, or was it some official? They noticed that as one Minister went out a new Minister came in, and, if all reports were true, there was seemingly no difficulty at all about that in view of the number of applications to fill the position. What he would like to know was, how and where this money was spent? Were the troops employed in China all British;

were they white troops, for after all the declared and avowed policy of the Government was Imperialistic? They declared that they were the pillars of the Empire; that they held up the Empire; and that they hoped to bring the Colonies together. In bringing troops to China, did they bring all British troops?

*THE CHAIRMAN said that that had nothing whatever to do with the Vote; and he invited the hon. Gentleman to give his attention to the question under discussion.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said he was discussing the transport of troops to China; perhaps he was wrong in doing that, and he might be right if he would take up the next question—that of remounts. Where were these remounts bought, and what was the price paid for them?

Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER* rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 137; Noes, 98. (Division List No. 24.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Chrstch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Finch, Rt Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A.W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriesshr
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mbTyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Chares Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES —Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 104; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 25.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell, Bannerman, Sir H.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reckett, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford

Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. B. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A(Worc
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. P. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks, N.R.)
Lee, A H. (Hants. Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mb Tyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Ed. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major, W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that this item of £700,000 included the purchase of remounts. He noticed in the papers a paragraph from Reuter's correspondent stating that in Somaliland camels had been purchased at elastic prices. He thought they were entitled to have some explanation as to how this vast sum of £700,000 had been spent upon transport and remounts. Everybody knew that in this expedition the question of transport had been from first to last the crux of the situation. It had been exceedingly difficult to move troops from post to post but he did not think there was any excuse for such a wastage of animals as was represented by this large sum. He wished to know what number of transport animals was included in this £700,000. During the late Boer war they were constantly told that it was impossible to give the price at which the transport animals were bought, but in the end they were presented with a bill of £15,500,000. With regard to this expedition over £1,000,000 had been spent in transport already, and they ought to have some details of this expenditure. Who was responsible for this expenditure? Were the remounts being bought by the Indian or the British Remount and Transport Department, and upon what system were they bought? Were they bought through the medium of large contractors or haphazard on the spot by advertisement? He wished to know whether economical methods had been adopted and he wanted some general information.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said the sum under this head was a very large one, although nobody could be surprised that the cost of transport in this campaign was very large. This was not merely a question of what they had spent upon transport, but as to what they were going to spend, and the expenditure of the future was certain to be very large. The item as it was now presented to them, was about three times the estimated cost of the whole campaign, and it would continue to be one of their largest items of expenditure. The Secretary of State for War had said he had some expectation of a favourable result, but he could not prophesy as to what the course of events would be, and they were, therefore, pursuing what might be an interminable expenditure, and this would have a very bad effect upon public opinion. He was satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had represented that night the common sense of the country upon the Somaliland campaign. He also believed that the right hon. Gentleman in the views he had expressed represented the views of the majority of the House of Commons and he felt certain that he represented the views of the great majority of people outside the House. This expedition was regarded as a purposeless campaign which offered no hope of termination within a reasonable period, and it was being waged with very little hope of a satisfactory result.

*The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has no right to go into the policy of the campaign except so far as it refers to transport and remounts.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON said he merely referred to the size of this item for remounts as an example of the need that there was for some far more specific statement of policy than they had yet received from the War Office, to justify what was a very unsatisfactory campaign.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said it was quite true that the Supplementary Estimates were three times the size of the original Estimates, but it should not be forgotten that the original Estimate was based on the assumption that the campaign would have come to an end much earlier. Hon. Members opposite would admit that the whole House had by a majority approved of the campaign, and the only question now before them was whether they would vote the necessary supplies. He did not feel so much concerned about the arguments as to the policy, but what did concern him was the fact that they were at war and the troops must be properly supplied, well fed, well armed, and well equipped. The House having approved of the policy, it was now asked to vote the necessary supplies. He had been asked how the sum of £700,000 required for transport and remounts was distributed. In respect of £400,000 it represented the transport of troops, animals, and stores from India to the seat of war, and the balance of £300,000 represented, for the most part, the purchase of transport animals, both locally and by the Indian Government. He believed the number of animals—camels, horses, and mules—was about 19,000. They had cost, therefore, an average of about £16 each. He did not know that unnecessarily high prices had been paid.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he did not think the hon. Member could expect them to be quite satisfied with that explanation.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: We are not satisfied at all.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he agreed with the hon. Member that if they were going on with this campaign it would be most foolish extravagance not to provide the Army with proper equipment. What the hon. Member did not tell them was upon what system this large amount of transport had been bought. From their experience in the last war in South Africa, they knew that it made all the difference in the world as to how they bought the animals. They had most startling disclosures during the Boer war as to the purchase of remounts, and what guarantee had they that something of the same sort had not been perpetrated in this case. He understood that in India a complete system of information had been organised, and that the Government bought through large contractors, rejecting animals which were not up to the proper standard. Had that method been adopted, or had we gone on under the old system of buying leisurely through dealers, which obtained under the British Remount Department in connection with the War Office? Those were points upon which the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had said nothing, and, while he was very unwilling to move a reduction, to put himself on the safe side, he would move that the Vote be reduced by £100 in order to get an effective answer from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head F (Somaliland Expeditionary Force, Transport and Remounts), be reduced by £100." —(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said if the hon. Gentleman was satisfied with the Indian system he might withdraw his Motion. The campaign was being managed and conducted under the Indian Government out of funds provided by the War Department. He was not himself responsible for the conduct of the campaign. The animals were being purchased by the Indian Government, and presumably under the system which the hon. Member approved.

MR. FLYNN complained that the estimate was originally only £100,000. Who outside Bedlam would have expected to see the Estimate swollen from £100,000 to £800,000. He remembered reading some of the detailed accounts of the expedition against the Mad Mullah—he was rather inclined to think the word "Mad" should be transferred from the the Mullah to the War Office. He could not forget having read that we were so unprepared for the expedition on which we had entered that the wily dervishes took the opportunity to sell us their camels at enhanced prices. Clearly the Indian Government had failed to take the proper precautions to secure a supply of transport animals. There was too much elasticity in this Estimate—indeed, to describe as elastic an increase of eight times the original Estimate was to abuse the word; it was something more than elastic.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND complained that although they had been told that the campaign was being conducted by the Indian Government, yet they had not had a single, solitary word from the Secretary for India to show that he took the slightest interest in the matter. He could not admit that the House of Commons had accepted the responsibility for this war. At every stage in connection with the proceedings most vigorous and emphatic protests had been entered against the operations by Members of the House. Even the majority could not be said to have authorised the expenditure.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is now travelling a long way from the Vote before the Committee.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he recognised that the right hon. Gentleman was anxious to conduct the proceedings in the fairest possible way, but he submitted that he was only making a legitimate reply to a statement from the

Government Benches as to the responsibility of the House of Commons.

*The CHAIRMAN: That was the reason why I did not interrupt the hon. Member before. I now invite him to give his attention to the item before the Committee.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I am very much obliged for your kindly invitation. I am most anxious to pay the closest attention in my power to the Vote. The hon. Member then went on to state that his objection to the item was that the House sanctioned the expedition on the understanding that £100,000 would be sufficient for transport, yet now the heads of the War Office came down and said, "We have made a little mistake; we ought to have asked for £800,000 for transports in this wretched, miserable war in Somaliland." Would hon. Members have so cheerfully voted money for the war had they known that the expenditure on that would have been so enormously increased? This one item was an illustration of the whole policy of the Government in the matter. Nobody knew where we were being led to. Was it unreasonable for hon. Members representing Ireland to ask for a plain and clear indication as to what was in the minds of the authorities with regard to this protracted campaign? Were they to anticipate any further increases of expenditure?

*The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. Member has forgotten my invitation. I must renew my invitation to him to confine himself strictly to the item now before the Committee.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I certainly had not forgotten you, Sir, and I hope I never shall.

Mr. Arnold-Forster rose in his place and claimed to move, That the Question be now put.

*The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is about to bring his observations to a close, therefore for the present I will not accept the Motion.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: You are perfectly correct, Sir. It is a good thing

for the good order and good temper of the debate that you are in the chair instead of a gentleman so impatient that he will not allow anybody to criticise, even for five minutes, the Department for which he is reponsible. In conclusion, the hon. Member asked if the ratepayers were ever to get rid of the nightmare of that miserable, inglorious, and futile expedition? Was it in accordance with ancient usage that such Supplementary Estimates should be put down without any explanation at all? He claimed that they ought to protest by dividing against that system of enormously increased Supplementary Estimates and also against a war, commenced by the Foreign Office, muddled by the War Office but managed by the India Office, the representative of which had not deigned to say a word in regard to it.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) asked if the Government had taken every possible step to secure the utmost economy in this matter. In the Report of the Royal Commission on the South African War was the evidence of several witnesses who recommended the appointment of financial advisers to be attached to future expeditions in order to advise the General Commanding and to have an oversight over questions of contracting and accountancy. Had that course been followed in the present instance?

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) inquired if the sum now asked for covered any estimated expenditure beyond the 31st March?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER replied that the purchases were made in this case in Aden and India, and there was consequently no necessity to attach a financial adviser to the staff of the commander of the expedition. In reply to the hon. Member for Islington, of course only expenditure to the 31st March was covered by the Estimate.

Mr. FLYNN said his information was that the bulk of the camels were purchased at the seat of war.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) complained of the unsatisfactory character of the Government explanations.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 120; Noes, 169; (Division List No. 26)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. (Leicester)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudd'rsf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Sir Joseph Leese.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop

Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.)
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BUCHANAN remarked that various explanations had been given with regard to the item of £900,000 for Imperial railways, the latest, and probably the best considered and most accurate, being that these railways in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony were taken and worked by the military authorities during the war, that they were worked by them on their own account to 31st March, 1902, and on the colonial account until 30th June, 1902; that so far as working expenses during that period were concerned, there was nothing included in the Vote; and that during their occupation the military spent large sums of money in improving the lines and purchasing rolling-stock. All this expenditure took place before 31st March, because anything after that date would have been debited to the colonial Government. Apparently the House of Commons was never informed of he matter, as no entry of the expenditture appeared on the Estimates, unless, as had been suggested, it was included in the item of £350,000 for stores supplied from stock. If that suggestion was correct, he did not think it was a fair or frank method of bringing so important a matter before the House. It further appeared that this money was carried to, and kept for two years in, a Suspense Account. That was a somewhat unusual course, and he desired to know whether it had the sanction of the Treasury; if so, whether there was no limit as to the amount for, and the time which, such a suspense account could be carried on. As to the counter-claim, the

Committee was entitled to know on what basis it was made up, and on what foundation the expectation that the bulk of the money would be refunded by the Transvaal was raised. Further, was the £1,000,000 expected from the Transvaal, the £1,000,000 due under the South African Loan Act of last year, or was it the sum expected to be paid in respect of the expenditure on the lines during their occupation by the military authorities? In order to elicit a reply on these points he moved to reduce the Vote by £5,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Vote 6, Sub-head BB (South Africa, Expenditure in connection with Imperial Military Railways), be reduced by £5,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) asked from what source this £900,000 was obtained. It appeared to be admitted that in or before 1902, a sum of either £900,000 or £1,230,000 had been paid on account of the railways in South Africa. No Vote had been taken in the House to justify the expenditure, and no mention of the payment appeared in the Finance Accounts of 1902 or 1903. It came as a great shock to him to learn that so large a sum as £900,000 could be paid without any authority from Parliament, and without any mention in the financial accounts of the year that such a payment had been made. Was this payment included in the Exchequer issues for Army Services in 1902 or 1903? If it was, he did not understand the necessity for a Supplementary Estimate now. If it was not so included, the natural conclusion was that money voted for totally different purposes had been diverted to this, and unless some explanation could be given, their confidence in the whole system of accounts must be considerably shaken. There certainly appeared to have been a breach of the rules of sound financial administration.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) understood that this sum of £900,000 had been spent by the Imperial Government on the railways, and that there was an obligation on the part of somebody to repay the money, but that it was not repaid because something in the nature of a counter-claim had been set up. That being so, he desired to ask what were the particulars of the counter-claim, was it simply a case of unliquidated damages? Who were the parties to the issue, and by what tribunal was the case to be tried?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said the last point had already been answered. ["No."] He did not know whether the hon. Member for Accrington attached value to the legal phraseology in which he couched his inquiries.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE said that what he wanted to know was who made the counter-claim, and what were its details?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN explained that there was a claim for a sum of money now on the Votes, a claim which, after this Vote was passed, remained unaffected, on the part of the Government of this country against the Government of the Colony. There was a counter-claim by the Government of the Colony, which was not admitted by His Majesty's Government, for wear and tear and damage to the railways while in the possession or occupation of the military authorities. His object in rising, however, was not to repeat an explanation he had already given, but to reply to the inquiries of the hon. Member for East Perthshire and his hon. friend the Member for Exeter. His hon. friend had asked about the £900,000 expended in improvements to the railways in the colonies and he wished to know from what source that money was obtained. The history of the transaction was this: the military authorities reported that certain additions to railway communications were required for military operations for the war which was then being conducted. They also required additional rolling stock to successfully conclude the war. The Civil Government agreed that these additions would be of value to the Colony when they took over the railways on the re-establishment of peace. They agreed to pay for them, and did not dispute their liability to pay on that account. In these circumstances, the War Office applied to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day to know whether they might sanction an advance from military funds for these purposes, and the Treasury gave their approval. This sum was provided for in the Exchequer issues of 1901–2 and 1902–3. Thus, on the 31st of March, certain liabilities remained outstanding, being represented by the outstanding imprests for which accounts were not rendered. His hon. friend had asked whether this continued for an unlimited time without coming to the knowledge of the Department, and whether this sum was included in the Exchequer issues. This sum was provided out of the Exchequer issues. The House of Commons voted a certain sum of money and the Exchequer issues were within the limits of the sum voted by the House on the demand of the spending Department. As this expenditure took place all over the world, it was impossible to know what would be the actual claim on the 31st March, and it inevitably happened that some balances remained unexpended on the 31st of March. He would assume, for example, that the House granted £10,000 for a particular purpose. The spending Department would draw upon the Exchequer for £10,000, but when the accounts were closed and audited he would assume that they had not spent the £10,000 but £100 short of that amount. What then would be the procedure? That £100 which they had received and which was an Exchequer issue, but for which they could produce no voucher in that year, would be deducted from the grant which Parliament made to them in the subsequent year. They would be considered as having that amount in hand, and the Vote which Parliament made would be paid to them in an Exchequer issue less by the amount remaining unaccounted for at the close of the previous year. This money which had been referred to was included in the Exchequer issues of 1901–2 and 1902–3. His hon. friend had inquired how long this had gone on without coming to the knowledge of the Department. The accounts of any financial year, which ended on 31st March, were finally closed on 30th September. As soon as possible after that date the Comptroller and Auditor-General was furnished with a statement of the balance outstanding on these accounts. That statement appeared on the Appropriation Accounts rendered to Parliament, and the Committee would find the whole of the sum included in the Appropriation Accounts, which would be in the hands of Members in a very few days, together with the remarks of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon them.

MR. BUCHANAN asked if the right hon. Gentleman meant that this sum was included in the Appropriation Accounts of 1901–2 or 1902–3.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said it was alluded to in the Auditor-General's Report for 1901–2, and the whole matter in its final and definite form would appear in the Comptroller and Auditor-General's Report on the Appropriation Accounts of 1902–3. A complaint had been made that the Auditor and Comptroller-General had not called attention to this matter, but he was aware of what was going on as would be seen from the correspondence which he carried on with the War Office and the Treasury at that time. The hon. Member himself was a member of the Public Accounts Committee for many years, and he knew that the Comptroller and Auditor-General was the officer of this House and not of the Treasury or of any Department of the Government; in fact he was independent of them, and it was not for them to suggest what action he should take. He was not quite sure whether he had made this matter clear to the House, but his hon. friend would understand that the money was included in the Exchequer issues; it appeared as an outstanding balance and could not run beyond the 30th of September without being disclosed by the War Office, and reported to the House by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. He thought it would have been better if the Treasury had insisted that a Supplementary Estimate should have been taken for this sum at an earlier time. He was loth to criticise even in a friendly spirit anything that had been done by the Treasury when he was not responsible, but as a guide for the future he thought the Treasury ought to take the earliest opportunity of placing sums of this kind before the House in the form of Estimates, reserving to themselves the full right of claiming repayment from those from whom repayment was due. The voting of this money would close the War Office account, but it would not give any relief to the person upon whom they had a claim; their claim remained in force, and they would do their best to secure its payment in due time. He had told the House the history of this very complicated matter, and he did not think the Treasury ought to allow a sum of this kind to be carried beyond the very first opportunity they had of bringing it to the notice of the House.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE asked what tribunal was it proposed should decide as to the value of the claim and counter-claim.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said there was no tribunal required to settle a dispute between the colonial Government and the home Government.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE asked who was to decide on the counter-claim.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said this was a matter of arrangement between the colonial authorities and the Government. He deprecated any suggestion that a question of account or claim and counter-claim between a colony and ourselves should be treated as a matter to be referred to some outside tribunal. He hoped that they might arrange these matters amicably by negotiations between the authorities at home and in the colony, without the necessity of introducing any third party.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) said that, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer who was responsible for allowing this expenditure out of the Army Votes in 1901–2, he thought his right hon. friend had given a perfectly fair account of what happened at that time. There certainly was a clear understanding given to him by those who represented the War Office at the time, that this expenditure was absolutely necessary for the purposes of the war, and therefore he thought that it might be properly charged on the Exchequer issues for the war. The expenditure was for rolling stock and repairing the line, and therefore he further obtained a promise that on account of the improvement in the rolling stock and in the line, which, of course, would be due to that expenditure, the colonial Government, which after the war took over the railway, and would have the benefit of the railways in the future, would recoup the Imperial Exchequer for both those amounts. In those circumstances he sanctioned that expenditure. He ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer in August, 1902, and of course knew nothing of any subsequent proceedings; but he could quite understand that his successor did not like apparently to throw doubt upon the recovery of the money from the Transvaal by submitting an Estimate in the year 1902–03 for its repayment; and he hoped that nothing that had been said, or would be said, in that debate would throw any doubt upon that recovery. He did not think that any fairer charge could be imposed upon the Colonies than this. They would have the benefit of all the expenditure, and, as to the counter-claim, personally he did not much believe in it.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he was sure no hon. Member would cast any doubt upon this counter-claim. As regarded the actual position of this particular fund he was left as much in the dark at the end of the right hon. Gentleman's speech as he was at the beginning. He thought the criticisms of his hon. friend had been more than justified and he agreed that this sum ought not to appear in this way, and it ought to have been liquidated before. Under these circumstances he did not think it was worth while to pursue the discussion of a very difficult question which he had great difficulty in following, and which had not been made much clearer by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. While he agreed that the small sums might very well be left in the suspense account it was not right that such a large sum as £900,000 should to be left over for two years in the suspense account which practically left it in the control of a particular Department. After the white sheet in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stood he did not desire to pursue the subject further.

MR. WHITLEY pointed out that one question which had not been dealt with was that this £1,250,000 was a claim on the Transvaal Government at the time these railways were handed over. The Committee would recollect that some ten months ago the House decided to authorise the raising of £35,000,000 under the Imperial guarantee, and part of that money, amounting to about £12,000,000, was to go to pay the Dutch shareholders and others who were the previous owners of those railways. Surely the claim of the home Government upon the colonial Government was in the nature of a prior claim. When those railways were handed over to the colonial Government as a business concern they were informed that they would produce a profit of no less than £2,500,000 a year, and it was clear that if the Government had shown any business capacity they would have insisted that this claim, which they said was a perfectly sound and just one, should have been met whilst they were owners of the line and they should have made proper arrangement for the settlement of their claim. The sum of £12,000,000 had been paid to the Dutch shareholders and the claim of the British taxpayer had been allowed to go by the board. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them no satisfactory assurance as to what was the nature of the acknowledgment of this debt. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman would lay on the Table any correspondence from Lord Milner which would show that this question had been treated as a legal obligation which they might recover. After Lord Milner's Government had stated that a profit of £2,500,000 a year was anticipated from these railways he thought the claim of the British taxpayers ought not to be deferred in this way, and it ought to be made a first charge upon the undertaking. He hoped they would be able to get more information upon this point.

MR. O'MARA said he should like to know something more about the counter-claim which the Colonies had made. They had heard nothing yet as to how far this country had been committed with regard to the spending of this £900,000. In the year 1901–02 the Chancellor of the Exchequer authorised the expenditure of £900,000 for the purpose of improving railways in South Africa on the understanding from the War Office that this expenditure was necessary for the purpose of carrying on the war, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day received an assurance that this sum would be repaid at the end of the war. On those two assurances the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 1901–2 authorised the expenditure of this money. The House of Commons was not informed of this fact, and it had not come within the cognisance of the House until the present time. It was a very serious thing for any Chancellor of the Exchequer to authorise payments, simply on the assurance of a Civil Government, over which he exercised no control, without first obtaining the consent of the House of Commons to the expenditure of such money. He considered that this was a breach of the traditional policy which governed the finances of this House. Any Chancellor of the Exchequer who did this kind of thing laid himself open to a charge of a gross breach of confidence in this House. How could they feel sure, under these circumstances, that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was not receiving similar assurances, and that public money was not now being spent in millions without the House knowing anything about it. Here was a sum of £900,000 which had been spent and the House was not informed of it until two years afterwards. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol had taken upon himself a responsibility which he ought not to have done. [Cries of "Divide, divide."] He could quite understand that hon. Members opposite did not care much about £900,000——

Mr. Secretary AKERS-DOUGLAS rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 170; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 27)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Maj Evans- (T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N. W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Faversh'm
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry

Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsfld
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 113; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 28).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)

Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R,)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsfid
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Buchanan and Sir Joseph Leese.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J, A. (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords, N.W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Faversh'm
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lusas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Chares
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und-Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major H. W.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Mr. Secretary AKERS-DOUGLAS claimed, "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz.:—

	£
Vote 1. Pay, etc., of the Army - - -	2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts - -	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies	2,030,000
Total -	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations-in-Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) -	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 169; Noes, 109. (Division List No. 29.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby (Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords, N.W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Faversh'm
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshir
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Colonel Samuel A.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, H C. (North'mb. Tyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry,
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall

Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Ayes.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn-Fellows.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Crean, Eugene
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt Hn.Herbert John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H.(Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley,George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse,Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Goddard and Mr. Runciman.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

VAGRANT CHILDREN'S PROTECTION.

Bill to provide for the further protection of the Children of Vagrants, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Spear, Mr. Bond, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Moon, Mr. Yerburgh, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Crooks, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, and Mr. Bousfield.

VAGRANTS' BILL.

"To provide for the further protection of the Children of Vagrants," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 98.]

Adjourned at twenty-eight Minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 26th February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Mid-Cheshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Clyde Valley Electrical Power Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Newcastle and Gateshead Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Llanelly Harbour Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Ticehurst and District Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]: Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl Fitzwilliam be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Verulam; read, and agreed to.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill. Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CROFTER COLONISATION.

Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a scheme of colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of crofters and cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland; with appendices.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Fifty-sixth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England; with an appendix.

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT THE NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES COMPANY'S FACTORY, UPTON TOWANS, CORNWALL).

Report to the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the precipitating and final washing houses of the factory of the National Explosives Company, Limited, at Upton Towans, Hayle, Cornwall, on the 5th January, 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The Electoral Act, No. XXXV., of 1904. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

SITE FOR DUKE OF YORK'S SCHOOL BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for extinguishing certain rights of way over certain lands situate in the parish of Guston, in the county of Kent—Was presented by the Lord Windsor; read 1^{a}; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 17.)

THE MISSION TO TIBET.

*LORD REAY, who had given notice "To call attention to the Papers on Tibet, and to move for further Papers," said: My Lords, the very interesting and rather formidable Blue-book relating to Tibet can be divided into three parts. There is first the period when Lord Elgin was at the head of affairs in India. I need say very little about his policy, because it was essentially a policy of peace. In Mr. Cuningham's letter, dated 4th March, 1896, my noble friend's policy is clearly laid down in these words—

> "The policy to be adopted towards the Tibetans should, therefore, be one of conciliation, and all action likely to produce friction should be carefully avoided. . . . The Governor-General in Council would deprecate recourse to threats."

With this attitude I am in cordial agreement. There is one other feature of his administration to which I must call your attention. In the letter mentioned above it is stated that—

> "In respect to territory near Giaogong, the Tibetans probably possess claims which it would not only be impolitic but inequitable to ignore."

Those words contain the admission by the Government of India that the demarcation under the Treaty of 1890 was open to objection and to revision. I now come to the second period, the administration of Lord Curzon. Lord Curzon is prepared to leave to Tibet those lands to which Lord Elgin had declared Tibet had claims, but he is only prepared to do so on condition that Phari is thrown open to native traders from India. He attaches a condition to the surrender of these lands to the Tibetans, but he is warned in a letter of the 13th of September, 1899, of the Government of Bengal, that the Tibetans would never consent to the opening of Phari to Indian traders except under compulsion. Three reasons are given for that resistance: in the first place, because it would injure an existing monopoly of Tibetan traders; and, in the next place, because the Tibetans were afraid that friction might arise with the British Government which they wanted to avoid, and because they have an inveterate dislike to the entry of any foreigners, Chinese as well as English, within their territory.

The next point to which I wish to call attention is that relating to the attempts to enter into direct correspondence with the Dalai Lama. Three attempts were made, but all three failed. Ugyen Kazi, the Bhutan Vakil, was employed for that purpose on two occasions. Hearing that the first and second attempts had failed, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal pointed out, in a letter of the 22nd of December, 1899, that it would be useless to make any further endeavour at present to open direct communication, through an agent, with the Tibetan authorities. The Dalai Lama could not take a letter without consulting the Council and the Chinese Amban, and he knew they would not agree, and he could not write a letter without first consulting the Amban. Ugyen Kazi says that—

> "The Dalai Lama is a clever man, and is really sorry that he was unable to accept the Viceroy's letter or send any letter."

In the account of Ugyen Kazi's visit to Lhasa it is stated that the Dalai Lama went on to say that he was precluded from writing any letter to any foreign Government, as during the time of Tangya Iling Demorin pochi an agreement was entered into by the Lamas, Sehaffis, and Ambans that no letters should be written without first consulting the Ambans. The Dalai Lama added that this agreement was not made by him but by his predecessor. This shows clearly that the proper method of communication was with the Chinese authorities, and not to attempt these useless representations to the Tibetan authorities, who were unwilling to receive them.

The next difficulty is that with regard to the removal of boundary pillars. Indian administrators are well aware that boundary pillars in inaccessible regions are very likely to be removed, and that we cannot hold the Native Government in every single case responsible for such removal. Here, again, I would call attention to the view which Lord Elgin took as to the removal of boundary pillars. He stated in his despatch of the 25th of June, 1895, that—

> "No serious practical inconvenience had apparently arisen through the frontier being undemarcated,"

and he mentioned this very important fact, that—

> "Demarcation was not provided for in the Treaty of 1890."

That treaty gave us no right to insist on demarcation. The next controversy had reference to the grazing question. In a despatch dated the 8th of January, 1903, the Viceroy states that—

> "The grazing rights on the Sikkim side of the border, which had been usurped by the Tibetans, are, in fact, balanced by similar rights which are conceded to the Sikkimese across the Tibetan border, and that the *status quo* is probably the most convenient arrangement in the interest of both parties."

The grievance with regard to grazing rights is therefore considered to be non-existent. Dealing with these three points—the refusal to receive or to send letters, the removal of the boundary pillars, and the usurpation of grazing rights—I cannot see that they justify an advance of a mission into the heart of Tibet.

I now turn to the correspondence in the Blue-book, and, in the first place, to the despatch of the 13th of February, 1902, from Lord Curzon, in order to see what were the other difficulties with Tibet which could justify this mission. The Viceroy states that they were—

> "Informed by the Government of Bengal that an attempt which was made last year by the Indian Tea Association to introduce Indian tea into Tibet was rendered fruitless by the obstruction of the local Lamas and officials."

This was an attempt to push the tea trade into Tibet notwithstanding that the Tibetans prefer an inferior kind of Chinese tea and do not wish to change their usual habits. I do not see why we should insist on the Tibetans giving way on this point. There is in the despatch a very interesting passage about retaliation. The Viceroy says—

> "Another possible and legitimate course would be to stop all Tibetan trade with India, and all intercourse between the two countries. Such a step would, doubtless, prove a serious obstacle to Tibetan trade, and might tend to force the authorities to enter into negotiations with us,"

I would especially call your Lordships' attention to what follows—

> "but it would also entail hardship upon our own traders, and might ultimately result in the diversion of the Tibetan trade to Nepal."

The Viceroy therefore desists from retaliation. Retaliation would have injured our own traders and Nepal would have been the *tertius gaudens*. These are the usual results of retaliation. I almost regret that this experiment was not tried, because, if he had followed that course, we should have had an object lesson in retaliation, and the present situation would not have arisen. The Viceroy gives a further explanation of his policy. He says—

> "The policy of isolation pursued by the Tibetan Government is one that, from its own point of view, it may not be difficult to comprehend. But it is not compatible either with proximity to the territories of a great civilised Power at whose hands the Tibetan Government enjoys the fullest opportunities both for intercourse and trade, or with due respect for the treaty stipulations into which the Chinese Government has entered on its behalf. It is indeed the most extraordinary anachronism of the 20th century that there should exist, within less than 300 miles of the borders of British India a State and a Government, with whom political relations do not so much as exist, and with whom it is impossible even to exchange a written communication. Such a situation cannot in any case be lasting. But it seems desirable that it should be brought to an end with as little delay and commotion as possible."

I quite agree that it would be desirable to put an end to such a situation if you could do it without any commotion, but that certainly has not been the case; and a good deal of commotion is created by our attempt to force the Tibetans out of an isolation to which I hold they have a perfect right.

The next very important despatch is that of January the 8th, 1903, in which the Viceroy puts forward another reason for his policy. He says—

> "The second combination of circumstances that has materially affected the situation is the rumoured conclusion of a secret Agreement by which the Russian Government has acquired certain powers of interference in Tibet."

The Viceroy himself points out in another sentence, in which he says—

> "It is unnecessary for us to remind your Lordship that the Russian border nowhere even touches that of Tibet, and that the nearest point of Russian territory is considerably more than a thousand miles short of the Tibetan capital, which is situated in the extreme south, and in close proximity to the northern frontier of the Indian Empire."

How remote is the direct contact of Russia with Tibet.

Now, anyone who has read the fascinating account of Dr. Sven Hedin's attempt to get into Tibet through the desolate country which separates Tibet from Russia will have seen how incredible it would be that Russia should advance into Tibet from that side. But in the Blue-book we have important and positive declarations of the Russian Government. Count Lamsdorff informs Sir Charles Scott on July the 8th, 1901, that the mission of the Tibetan visitors—

> "Could not be regarded as having any political or diplomatic character."

With regard to a rumoured Agreement, between Russia and China concerning Tibet of which the terms are given in the Blue-book. In the first place two Chinese ministers told Sir Ernest Satow on September the 8th, 1902—

> "That no such arrangement had ever formed a subject of discussion between the Chinese and Russian Governments."

But the Russian Ambassador, Count Benckendorff—

> "Was able to assure the noble Marquess officially that there was no convention about Tibet, either with Tibet itself or with China,

> or with anyone else, nor had the Russian Government any Agents in that country or any intention of sending Agents or missions there."

I cannot conceive that any declaration could be clearer or more definite than this declaration of the Russian Government, which is contained in a despatch from the noble Marquess to Sir Charles Scott of April the 8th, 1903. The only link between Russia and Tibet is the large number of Buddhists in the Russian Empire who venerate the Dalai Lama as was pointed out by Count Lamsdorff to Sir Charles Scott on the 8th of July, 1901.

There is a very important despatch from the noble Marquess to Mr. Spring-Rice of the 17th November, 1903, in which it is stated that the Russian Ambassador said—

> "It was most unfortunate that, at the present moment, when the Russian Government were, as I was aware, disposed to enter into an amicable discussion of our relations at the various points where British and Russian interests were in contact, an event of this kind, so calculated to create mistrust on the part of Russia, should have occurred."

My Lords, that is an extremely important statement. It is inherent to our political position that, whenever we advance, there should be mistrust in Russia, and whenever Russia advances, there should be mistrust in England. Therefore the statement that the Russian Government was disposed to enter into an amicable discussion is most satisfactory, and I trust that the noble Marquess will inform us that on his part there was the same amicable disposition to enter into that discussion and to attempt to remove, once and for all, the causes of reciprocal suspicion of motives which ought not to exist between two Powers having such enormous—not necessarily conflicting—interests in Asia. I return to the Viceroy's despatch in which he proposes to accept the Chinese proposals of having a Conference, but he adds the most extraordinary condition that the Conference shall take place, not upon our frontier, but at Lhasa. Now it was obvious that such a proposal could never be accepted by the Lamas. In that same despatch there is an interesting extract from a despatch from Sir Thomas Wade to Earl Granville. No one knew China and the methods of the Chinese better than Sir Thomas Wade, and great weight must, therefore, be attached to what he says. He stated—

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> "If the trade (*i.e.*, between India and Tibet) be worth the effort, I think that it might possibly be opened, were a mixed official and commercial mission pushed forward without reference to the Court of Peking, which is always careful to declare that in this or in any other matter Tibet may act as she pleases, and if that mission were authorised in the first instance to spend money rather freely."

But the Government of India of that date, who were asked for their opinion on this suggestion by the Secretary of State, replied in an unfavourable sense, not being impressed, as our records show, with the trade prospects. And when I look at the figures which are given in the Blue-book with regard to our present trade with Tibet, I am bound to say that I am not impressed by the prospects of that trade; and it seems to me that it is hardly worth while forcing unwilling Tibetans to take our merchandise. I think that we must use those means which Sir Thomas Wade suggests and "spend money rather freely" and avoid anything which has the appearance of a hostile act. With regard to the suzerainty of China, the Viceroy used this extraordinary expression—

> "We regard the so-called suzerainty of China over Tibet as a constitutional fiction—a political affectation which has only been maintained because of its convenience to both parties."

This strikes me as an extremely impolitic assertion that a situation which our Government had always recognised, which is founded on law, history, and tradition should be considered a constitutional fiction—extremely impolitic when we realise what suzerainty means to us in India.

The Viceroy continues—

> "Our proposal therefore is that, assuming it to be decided by His Majesty's Government to respond in a favourable sense to the overtures of the Waiwupu, the Chinese Government shall be informed that we can undertake the negotiations nowhere else than at Lhasa, and that a British Commercial Mission will start for that place at a suitable date in the forthcoming spring, there to meet the Chinese resident and a duly appointed high official of the Tibetan Government. We propose that the negotiations should cover not merely the small question of the Sikkim frontier, but the entire question of our future relations, commercial and otherwise, with Tibet; and we think that they should culminate in the appointment of a permanent British representative, Consular or Diplomatic, to reside at Lhasa."

That was a most imprudent proposal, and one which I am happy to say the home Government vetoed. A very important despatch from Lord George Hamilton, dated 27th February, 1903, followed, in which it was stated by the Secretary of State that—

"His Majesty's Government fully recognise that the establishment of a powerful foreign influence in Tibet would disturb those relations, and might even, by exposing Nepal to a pressure which it would be difficult to resist, affect those which at present exist on so cordial a basis between India and Nepal. Having regard to these considerations, His Majesty's Government, while regretting the necessity for abandoning the passive attitude that has hitherto sufficed in the regulation of the affairs of this portion of the frontier of India, are compelled to recognise that circumstances have recently occurred which throw on them the obligation of placing our relations with the Government of Lhasa upon a more satisfactory footing. Your Excellency's proposal to send an armed mission to enter Lhasa, by force if necessary, and establish there a Resident, might, no doubt, if the issue were simply one between India and Tibet, be justified as a legitimate reply to the action of the Tibetan Government in returning the letters which on three occasions you have addressed to them, and in disregarding the Convention with China of 1890, the validity of which was repudiated by the Tibetan officials who visited our Political Officer while he was inspecting the frontier laid down by that Convention. Such action undoubtedly warrants the adoption of strong measures, and I have expressed this opinion in my despatch of the 16th August, 1901. But His Majesty's Government cannot regard the question as one concerning India and Thibet alone. The position of China, in its relations to the Powers of Europe, has been so modified in recent years that it is necessary to take into account those altered conditions in deciding on action affecting what must still be regarded as a province of China."

Far from looking upon the suzerainty as a constitutional fiction the home Government looked upon Tibet as a province of China. Lord George Hamilton continued—

"It is true, as stated in your Excellency's letter, that we have no desire either to declare a protectorate or permanently to occupy any portion of the country. Measures of this kind might, however, become inevitable if we were once to find ourselves committed to armed intervention in Tibet, and it is almost certain that, were the British mission to encounter opposition, questions would be raised which would have to be considered not as local ones concerning Tibet and India exclusively, but from an international point of view, as involving the *status* of a portion of the Chinese Empire. For these reasons His Majesty's Government think it necessary, before sanctioning a course which might be regarded as an attack on the integrity of the Chinese Empire, to be sure that such action can be justified by the previous action of Tibet, and they have accordingly come to the conclusion that it would be premature to adopt measures so likely to precipitate a crisis in the affairs of Tibet as those which your Excellency has proposed."

Lord George Hamilton very wisely would not hear of a mission to Lhasa or of an agent at Lhasa, and that proposal was therefore set aside. In his telegram of 29th April he says—

"There is no objection to the Chinese, Tibetan, and Indian representatives meeting, as proposed in your telegram of 16th April, at Khambajong, or to the military arrangements you recommend; but His Majesty's Government consider that, without previous reference to them, the British mission should not advance beyond that place, as, in existing conditions, even in the event of the failure of the Chinese and Tibetan parties to meet, any sudden advance to Lhasa is not, in their opinion, justified."

The home Government very clearly saw the tendency of the policy of the Viceroy, and tried to check it. But the Viceroy, in his telegram of 7th May, returns to the charge. He says—

"Having regard to stultification of existing treaty provisions and to the unsuitability of Yatung, Phari, or any other place in the Chumbi Valley for a trade mart in which business can be transacted directly between British and Tibetan merchants without incurring monopoly of local traders, it is necessary to insist upon opening a new trade mart and upon having a British Agent at Gyangtse, an important trade centre on main route to Shigatse and Lhasa. I think that having British representative at Lhasa, which would be best possible security for future observance of conditions, would be far preferable."

The Viceroy still insists on the British representative at Lhasa. He continues—

"but, assuming the unwillingness of His Majesty's Government to press this claim, our proposal of Gyangtse is a suitable alternative. In any case the British representative must reside on north side of the passes so as to be able to communicate promptly with the Capital In framing the new regulations the Tibetan and Chinese authorities should be made clearly to understand that fullest facilities must be given to the British representative for direct communication with the Tibetan Government in all matters, and that if he is met by attitude of obstruction, it will be necessary to resort to alternative of moving him forward to Lhasa."

The Viceroy does not accept Lord George Hamilton's policy, and proposes an alternative policy, which involves conditional resort to a forward move to Lhasa, which was the very contingency to be most scrupulously avoided.

The Secretary of State, on 28th May, replied—

"They (His Majesty's Government) wish, however, that the negotiations should be restricted to questions concerning trade relations, the frontier, and grazing rights; and they desire that no proposal should be made for the establishment of a political agent either at Gyangtse or at Lhasa."

Lord George Hamilton very judiciously added that—

"Such a political outpost might entail difficulties and responsibilities incommensurate, in the judgment of His Majesty's Government, with any benefit which, in the circumstances now known to exist, could be gained by it . . . . His Majesty's Government are unwilling to be committed, by threats accompanying the proposals which may be made, to any definite course of compulsion to be undertaken in the future. They authorise you, then, subject to the conditions above stated, to communicate with the Chinese Resident and Tibetan representative, fixing Khambajong as the place of meeting."

It is therefore quite clear that the home Government did not wish any other course to be pursued than that of friendly negotiations, and that threats or hostilities should be avoided. Then a new incident occurred. Two British subjects were imprisoned at Shigatse, and the Tibetans declined to restore them. The last information regarding those two prisoners is contained in a letter dated 22nd December, from the Chinese Minister, in which he says that the two natives who were reported to have been put o death are alive and well, but still under detention, and that instructions have been given for their immediate liberation. Perhaps the noble Earl will be able to tell us where those two British subjects are at present. Then on 16th September the Viceroy warned the Government that Colonel Younghusband despaired of a peaceful solution and said that until the Tibetans realised the seriousness of our intentions nothing would be done. The Viceroy continued—

"He (Colonel Younghusband) foresees that the occupation of the Chumbi Valley and advance of Mission seventy-five miles beyond Khambajong to Gyangtse will be eventually necessary. We think that occupation of Chumbi Valley will be insufficient to put serious pressure on Lhasa, and that it is almost certain that Mission will have to advance."

And the Viceroy adds that—

"His Majesty's Government should realise that the Lhasa Government have no conception of our power."

It seems to me that one of the reasons why the Tibetans are so anxious to preserve their isolation is that they are

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well aware of our power, and that they are afraid of it. That seems to me a much more natural explanation of their attitude than that they have no conception of our power. The Viceroy goes on to say—

"A further complication is that any sort of action will be difficult after November."

But in his telegram of 26th October the state of the weather after November is not considered to be likely to lead to complications, for the Viceroy says—

"Though cold, the season of the year is entirely favourable, and we anticipate no difficulty in carrying through operations and maintaining communications and supplies."

Again the Secretary of State tries to restrain the Viceroy. In his telegram of 20th September, Lord George Hamilton said—

"In the event of coercion becoming necessary, military situation will have to be considered, but proposal to advance far into the interior is regarded with grave misgiving by His Majesty's Government, who are disposed to think that the fact that we are in earnest may be sufficiently brought home to the Tibetans by the occupation of the Chumbi Valley in the first instance."

In his last telegram of 1st October—and I regret that Lord George Hamilton is no longer at the head of Indian affairs with which he was so thoroughly conversant—he says—

"If complete rupture of negotiations proves inevitable, His Majesty's Government, having again considered position, are now prepared to authorise not only occupation of Chumbi Valley, but also the advance, if it can be made with safety, of the mission to Gyangtse."

Subject to certain conditions—"if a complete rupture of negotiations proves inevitable," and "if it can be made with safety," the mission may advance to Gyangtse. The Viceroy in his telegram of 26th October thereupon recommends that immediate advance to Gyangtse through the Chumbi Valley should be sanctioned. He says—

"Country beyond Chumbi Valley is open and rolling, and Tangla Pass, leading out of Chumbi Valley, is quite easy. Gyangtse is about eighty miles from Phari and about 140 miles from our frontier at the Jelap Pass. We should hope to commence movement by end of November. We do not anticipate any serious resistance."

Therefore, Khambajong is abandoned and the route of the Chumbi Valley is taken. The Secretary of State asks on the 29th October whether the rupture of negotiations has taken place, and the Viceroy answers on 4th November—

> "The rupture of negotiations with Tibet (if, indeed, negotiations can be said to have ever begun) is not only inevitable, but has taken place."

We now enter on the third period of our recent relations with Tibet.

The Viceroy, in his despatch of 5th November, draws a line between the attitude of the Tibetan Government and the Tibetan people. He says that the Tibetan people, "instead of being suspicious or hostile, are, on the contrary, well-disposed and cheerful." If that is so, then I ask whether it would not have been wise to utilise their cheerful and peaceful disposition, and not to send among them a mission with an armed escort, which is of course required, but which is certainly not likely to increase their friendly feelings towards us. Again, the Government at home warned the Viceroy that the advance to Gyangtse, which they sanction, should not be allowed "to lead to occupation or to permanent intervention in Tibetan affairs in any form." The Secretary of State says, in his telegram of 6th November—

> "The advance should be made for the sole purpose of obtaining satisfaction, and as soon as reparation is obtained a withdrawal should be effected. While His Majesty's Government consider the proposed action to be necessary, they are not prepared to establish a permanent mission in Tibet, and the question of enforcing trade facilities in that country must be considered in the light of the decision conveyed in this telegram."

The Viceroy states on 6th December—

> "The Tibetan General at Yatung is reported by Colonel Younghusband to have asked to be given a pledge that if the Tibetans make no attack upon us, no attack will be made by us on them. To this Colonel Younghusband has replied that we are conducting the mission, under adequate protection, to a place better fitted for negotiations, that we are not at war with Tibet, and that, unless we are ourselves attacked, we shall not attack the Tibetans."

The last telegram of the Secretary of State, dated 30th January, refers to this, as follows—

> "Every safeguard should be employed to ensure security of mission, but Colonel Younghusband should be definitely instructed to observe the spirit of his statement to the Tibetan General, reported in your telegram of 6th December. No hostile action must be taken by him unless he is attacked or finds that there is actual danger of his communications with base being cut off by Tibetans."

The House will see from this narrative that the Viceroy is convinced that our relations with Tibet cannot be placed on a satisfactory footing without a representative at Lhasa and that he has been able to persuade the home Government to accompany him as far as Gyangtse.

Now I wish to ask the noble Earl whether we can receive an assurance that Colonel Younghusband will in no circumstances be allowed to advance beyond Gyangtse, and whether the Indian Government has been informed that an occupation or advance upon Lhasa will not be authorised by His Majesty's Government. I further wish to hear from the noble Earl when the last intelligence was received from the mission, where Colonel Younghusband is at present, where General Macdonald is, and what their next movements will be. I trust we may be told what is the exact object of the negotiations, and whether any recent instructions have been given to Colonel Younghusband in order that he should seize every opportunity which may present itself to enter into negotiations. It is quite clear that it is unnecessary and impolitic to insist on these negotiations being conducted at Gyangtse, and that there is no reason why they should not be initiated under favourable auspices before Gyangtse is reached. If the Government—as I am quite willing to believe—wish to avoid hostilities, they should take the earliest opportunity of negotiating a new treaty. At a moment when events of such importance are occurring in the Far East and in the Near East, it is obviously the duty of His Majesty's Government to abstain from any action which might embarrass this country in Asia or in Europe.

Moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty for further Papers relating to Tibet."—(*The Lord Reay.*)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of HARDWICKE): My Lords, I do not think His Majesty's Government need take any serious exception to the criticism made against us in regard to the Blue-book that has been published on Tibet. At the same time we are not prepared to accept the suggestion of the noble Lord that our policy is in any sense different from the policy pursued by Lord Elgin. This question is not a new one, and the policy that we are endeavouring to carry out is contained in the words of Lord Curzon's despatch, in which he says that—

> "Our wish is to establish those amicable relations and means of communication that ought to subsist between adjacent and friendly Powers."

It is as long ago as 1774 that Warren Hastings, with this very object, despatched a Mission into Tibet under a Mr. Bogle. That mission went to Shigatse and though, so far as I am aware, no arrangements were come to with regard to trade, there is not the least doubt that very friendly relations were established between Bengal and Tibet. So much so that in 1784 Warren Hastings despatched a second mission also to Shigatse, under Mr. Turner, and on that occasion a very satisfactory arrangement was made. Tibet agreed to grant free admission into their country to all such merchants, natives of India, as should come recommended by the Governor-General, to yield them every assistance requisite for the transport of their goods, and to assign them a place of residence for vending their commodities. It would seem that our Indian trade developed considerably with Tibet till 1792, and then, unfortunately, the Nepal Gurkhas invaded Tibet, who then turned for assistance to China. That assistance was rendered, and the Chinese troops defeated the Gurkhas and drove them out of Tibet. Unfortunately, China and Tibet believed that the authorities in India had played some part in this invasion, and the result was that from that day forward strangers were prohibited from entering Tibet at all, the trade that had been so satisfactorily developed ceased, the door to Tibet was closed to India, and it has been closed ever since. No further attempt was made for nearly a century to open relations with Tibet; but in 1873 a real and serious attempt was made, a Commissioner being instructed to inquire into the condition and prospects of trade with Tibet, and the advisability of making a road through Sikkim to the Tibetan frontier. That road was made, and in 1885 it was decided to send a mission into Tibet. I think that is the mission which the noble Lord referred to. The Chinese Government approved, and the mission was organised. For reasons which is not necessary for me to enter into, that mission was countermanded, and an opportunity was lost of establishing relations with Tibet, which, I think, might have prevented the situation arising in which we now find ourselves. The abandonment of that mission had a disastrous effect on the minds of the Tibetans, who believed we had not sent it because we feared them, and the result was that they invaded Sikkim, and it became necessary for us to despatch a force of troops to turn them out. They were turned out in 1888, and during the ensuing two years negotiations with China were carried on, and they resulted in the signing of the convention of that date. This convention recognised our claims in Sikkim, defined the frontier and made provision for the subsequent discussion of trade regulations with Tibet. These regulations, which are also contained in the Blue-book, were discussed and agreed to by the Commissioners appointed for that purpose by His Majesty's Government and on behalf of China in the year 1893.

The Earl of Hardwicke.

I have ventured to give this short historical survey of the past, which brings us to the date at which the Papers dealing with this question commence, to show that there has been only one policy entertained with regard to Tibet, and it has been a policy of establishing relations and commercial intercourse with that country. It seems to me that a country adjacent to India, whose frontiers for hundreds of miles on the West and South are continuous with our frontiers, should not be in an isolated position; and the Government of that country should not be so exclusive as to refuse communication with us in any shape or form. The present position is the outcome of the policy which has been pursued. It may be an unfortunate outcome, but as our object was to establish trade relations and commercial intercourse with Tibet, the signing of the convention of 1890 left us no alternative to seeing that the terms of that convention were carried out. It is true that we might have adopted another policy altogether. We could hardly have said we would ignore the existence of Tibet, but we might have abandoned all hope of having any relations with that country at all. In that case, we should have had to fortify our frontiers at great cost in order to be in a position to resist any hostile combination that might take place. That would not have been a wise policy, and it has never been entertained by any Viceroy or Government; and for that reason I claim that we are now carrying out the one policy that has been adopted towards Tibet.

I now turn to the noble Lord's suggestion that we should have relied solely on China to see the terms of the convention of 1890 carried out. The noble Lord pointed out that Sir T. Wade, to whose experience and opinion he attached the greatest importance, had declared that, if trade between India and Tibet be worth the effort, he thought it might possibly be opened were a mixed official and commercial mission pushed forward without reference to the Court of Peking. I should very much like to know what is really the view of the noble Lord. Sir T. Wade's opinion was that we were not to have any reference to Peking. The noble Lord, on the other hand, says that we ought to have relied on Peking. I can only say that so far as the policy of His Majesty's Government is concerned we have always recognised the suzerainty that China has over Tibet; and in all the negotiations that have taken place the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary has been in close communication with the Chinese Minister and with the Government of Peking.

*LORD REAY: I beg the noble Earl's pardon. I did not say we should rely exclusively on Peking.

THE EARL of HARDWICKE: Then I understand the noble Lord to be in exact agreement with the policy that has been pursued by His Majesty's Government. We have not relied solely on Peking, but have recognised throughout the suzerainty of China; and the mission which was sent to Khambajong was despatched with the full cognisance and consent of the Chinese Government. There is a despatch in the Blue-book from Mr. Townley saying that the Chinese Government were thoroughly satisfied that the mission was advisable. I pass to another point that was raised by the noble Lord. The noble Lord referred to the despatch from the noble Marquess behind me to Mr. Spring-Rice, dated 17th November, 1903, and he read an extract from that despatch in which the noble Marquess said that the Russian Minister had informed him that the Russian Government could not help feeling that the invasion of Tibetan territory by a British force was calculated to involve a grave disturbance of the Central Asian situation, and was most unfortunate at that moment, when the Russian Government were disposed to enter into an amicable discussion of our relations at the various points where British and Russian interests were in contact. Well, I should have thought it would have been perfectly evident to the noble Lord that that statement had no reference to Tibet at all. It was not the Tibetan question that was going to be discussed amicably between the two Governments. I do not think that any word has fallen from the noble Marquess to suggest that we recognise that the Russian Government have any *locus standi* in Tibet.

*LORD REAY: I did not state that I understood it had reference to Tibet. I only asked for some explanation.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I beg the noble Lord's pardon. I misunderstood him. I will pass from that. The noble Lord suggested that if the Tibetans wish to be exclusive there is no reason why they should not be, and that attempts at opening up commercial intercourse with them are really unnecessary, as there is not much trade to be developed. I cannot accept that suggestion for a moment. The Indian Government cannot, in the nature of things, be indifferent to the internal affairs of a country adjacent to India. Though questions such as tea duties, grazing rights, etc., are very important matters and matters which, when they come to be discussed between the representatives of the Tibetans and the members of this mission, will no doubt have sufficient importance attached to them, there are matters of far greater importance than those to be considered.

I need only refer to this Blue-book to show that the Tibetans have refused to have any intercourse with us; but, on the other hand, they have been willing to have intercourse with another Power. We do not care whether the object of the mission sent from Tibet to St. Petersburg was commercial, political, or religious; it makes no difference to us. But we know that the result of that mission, and the result of the intercourse which has passed between the Tibetans and the Russians, has been to inspire the Tibetans with the feeling that they have the power of Russia behind them. They have said openly—

> "We do not fear England; we have Russia behind us."

That is a situation that the Indian Government and His Majesty's Government could not tolerate for a moment, and for that reason we have found it necessary at this time to insist upon a final settlement being come to. If we do not attach very much importance to the matters I have just referred to, I would ask the noble Lord, who is well acquainted with Indian feeling and Indian affairs, what Nepal would think of the British Government if we withheld our hand at the present time. Nepal has had relations with Tibet for many years, and yet the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Government of Nepal, has urged the Government of India to take action, intimating that if the present strained relations are to continue the position will become intolerable.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Where is that?

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: It is in the Prime Minister of Nepal's letter. Then the noble Lord referred to the difficulties of the expedition owing to the season of the year. I am glad to say that the escort, so far as the men are concerned, have suffered very little. Every possible comfort that could be given to them to provide against the cold has been ungrudgingly given, and, though the loss in transport has been very heavy, I do not think that we have any reason to deplore the health and well-being of the escort itself. With regard to the telegram from Lord George Hamilton, in which it was laid down that no advance was to take place unless negotiations were broken off, I think the conditions were amply fulfilled by the circumstances of the case. Colonel Younghusband remained at Khambajong for weeks and months, but could not get anyone to negotiate with him. The Chinese Amban was always coming, but never came. He eventually found that his communications on the subject were not forwarded to Lhasa, and he claimed that his position there was hopeless, and that unless we took further action nothing would come of the mission. The noble Lord seemed to think that there was something unusual in our having an armed escort with this mission. I would inform him that such an escort accompanied the Afghan Boundary Commission in 1885, the mission to Persia, and the Burma-China Frontier Commission in 1897. Therefore there was nothing unusual in sending an armed escort with the Commission which has gone to Thibet for the purpose—the peaceful purpose—of making a convention. The noble Lord asked me whether Colonel Younghusband had any definite instructions. The purposes for which Colonel Younghusband is going to Gyangtse are clearly set out in the telegram of His Majesty's Government, dated 28th May, 1903. In this telegram to the Viceroy it is stated that—

> "They (His Majesty's Government) agree with you in desiring the promotion of trade facilities in Tibet, and a guarantee that the Tibetans shall be prevented from evading or rejecting engagements made on their behalf in any new treaty or convention. A procedure, therefore whereby both the Chinese and Tibetan Governments will be bound by the acts of their representatives has their approval. They wish, however, that the negotiations should be restricted to questions concerning trade relations, the frontier, and grazing rights, and they desire that no proposal should be made for the establishment of a political agent, either at Gyangtse or at Lhasa."

Those instructions seem to me very clear indeed, but they are amplified in the Blue-book, page 198, in a letter from the Government of India to Colonel Younghusband, and the instructions he therein receives are set out very fully. The noble Lord then asked what was the latest information we had from the mission. The latest information is contained in a telegram of 23rd February from Tuna, where Colonel Younghusband is at present. No information is given with regard to Colonel Younghusband's movements, but the telegram contains an important and very satisfactory piece of news. It is that the Bhutan Envoy has met Colonel Younghusband and that they had no hostile intentions; and that he has also seen some Lhasa delegates and has urged them to come to a friendly and peaceful settlement with us. As regards General Macdonald, we have not received any information from him of recent date.

I hope the House will allow me to say a few words as to the general question and the grievances which we have against Tibet. We cannot forget that they have ignored for fourteen years their treaty obligations. A disposition has been shown in every possible way to thwart our trade with Tibet. We cannot pass over the encroachments made on our territories, nor can we ignore the destruction of our boundary pillars. The despatch of Lord Elgin's which the noble Lord referred to was written when the news first arrived of the destruction of these pillars. He will find later on in the Blue-book a more ample account which shows conclusively that the destruction of the boundary pillars was due to the Tibetans. The Tibetans have refused to receive any communication from us. The Viceroy has written three letters, and the noble Lord puts forward, as a reason for the Dalai Lama refusing to answer them, that he was unable to do so because he was pledged to the Suzerain Power not to receive or write any letters without the consent of the Suzerain. But why is it that the Lama did not ask the permission of the Chinese Amban to receive and answer them? If he had asked permission I am sure the Amban would have given it, and this course of action, if taken, might have avoided some of the misunderstandings that have arisen. The Government also cannot forget that while our officers were at Khambajong they did not receive respectful treatment from the Tibetans, and the Tibetans have arrested two British subjects, who, as far as we are aware, have not been released. Rumours of their being tortured came to our notice, but we have had no confirmation of that. The latest news which we have is contained in the Blue-book. It is a letter dated 25th October to Colonel Younghusband. It shows conclusively the power that the Chinese Amban, as a representative of the Suzerain, is capable of exercising in Tibet, and how little the Government can expect to get from China in this matter.

The final and most pointed request of the noble Lord was that the Government should give a pledge that Colonel Younghusband would not go further than Gyangtse. I can only state, in reply, that His Majesty's Government are not prepared to make any definite announcement on that subject. The instructions of His Majesty's Government to Colonel Younghusband are contained in this Blue-book. At the present time his objective is Gyangtse, and the question whether he goes further than Gyangtse must rest with the Tibetans themselves. I believe that Colonel Younghusband will shortly advance, and we trust that the Dalai Lama of Lhasa and his monastic advisers will yet recognise the peaceful object of our mission, that they will not oppose our advance, that the belated Chinese Amban, who has been since December, 1902, on his way, will be there to meet Colonel Younghusband, accompanied by responsible and duly accredited envoys of the Lamas, and that they will be prepared to discuss frankly and fairly the proposals which Colonel Younghusband has been instructed to submit. The Tibetans themselves have shown that they are most anxious to be on friendly terms with us. They have come forward willingly and eagerly to supply our mission, when they have been allowed to, with all their requirements; but I would point out to the noble Lord, who asked why we did not use the Tibetans in order to get influence with the Dalai Lama at Lhasa, that though they are very anxious and willing to be friendly with us they are afraid of its being known at Lhasa. Consequently I do not think we shall have much chance of coming into closer touch with the monastic Government of Lhasa through the Tibetan people, however friendly they may be toward us. If the Dalai Lama prefers to appeal to the arbitrament of the sword and to provoke hostilities we must necessarily accept that challenge. But I do not think that evidence is wanting of the generous patience that has been displayed by the Government of India, and by the Government at home, towards the procrastinating attitude of the Tibetans and the *non possumus* attitude of the Chinese during the last fourteen years, and more especially during the last few months. Nor do I think that evidence is wanting to show that Colonel Younghusband will do nothing to provoke a conflict. His instructions are contained in the last telegram in this Blue-book. No hostile action must be taken by him unless he is attacked or finds that there is actual danger of his communications with his base being cut off by the Tibetans. His Majesty's Government believe that those instructions will be rigidly adhered to by Colonel Younghusband, in whose forbearance, judgment, and capacity they place every confidence. I cannot foretell the future, nor can I say whether the Tibetans will oppose our advance or not. I can only hope that the historian of the future will be able to write that the desire of Warren Hastings to promote friendly relations and commercial intercourse with the neighbours of our greatest dependency was attained 130 years later under the able administration of Lord Curzon.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I quite share the aspiration of the noble Earl who has just sat down, that the friendliest relations should be maintained between the Government of India and the people of Tibet. But, my Lords, the question that is really raised by these Papers is, what are the methods by which His Majesty's Government are going to attempt to arrive at that desirable conclusion? The noble Earl in the commencement of his speech said that the policy of His Majesty's Government was identical with the policy of my noble friend Lord Elgin. The policy of my noble friend who preceded Lord Curzon in respect to this question of Tibet was marked, as all those who have read these Papers will, I am sure, admit, by moderation and prudence. I will allow that for a long time the policy of His Majesty's Government, as distinct from the policy of the Government of India, was upon the lines of the policy of my noble friend Lord Elgin. But I cannot for a moment agree, and I do not think that anybody who has looked at the Papers will be of the opinion, that the policy of Lord Curzon has ever been upon this question identical with the policy of my noble friend Lord Elgin. Lord Curzon entered upon his duties as Viceroy in January, 1899. On 30th March he drafted his first despatch to the Secretary of State for India upon the affairs of Tibet, and I venture to say that it is impossible for anyone to maintain that there was not a most marked distinction of tone and of intention between that despatch and those which had proceeded from the Government of Lord Elgin. And it is mainly the anxiety which the apparent policy of Lord Curzon has created in my mind which leads me to make some observations on the present state of things.

Perhaps I may be permitted to say that throughout the whole of the Government of Lord Curzon this is the first occasion, either in Parliament or out of it, upon which I have ever said a word of criticism of his Government. It is not a pleasant task for one who has been Viceroy of India to indulge in criticisms of a successor. I had believed that Lord Curzon, if he ever held, as I think he once did, what are called the doctrines of the forward policy in India, learnt very soon after he became Viceroy how unwise and how dangerous that policy was, and had decided to proceed upon much sounder principles; but, unfortunately, this Blue-book shows us that that was a mistake in regard to Lord Curzon's intention, and that if he did not pursue the forward policy in Afghanistan he was unfortunately all along endeavouring to pursue that policy towards the frontier of Tibet. There is the most remarkable similarity between the various efforts of the friends of the forward policy in the past and the views which have been expressed by Lord Curzon in regard to Tibet. Every step in that policy has been inspired by a Russian scare. The first fatal Afghan war began on those grounds and terminated as unhappily, we all know very well. In the case of the first Afghan war there was a live Russian agent. He was disavowed by his Government and put an end to his own life. On the second occasion, too, there was also a live Russian agent. But we have now nothing more than rumours of a Russian agent. There is no proof in these Papers that any Russian agent has been to Lhasa. A certain deputation went to St. Petersburg, but I do not think it can be maintained that that deputation was sent with the authority of the Government of Lhasa.

It is proposed to send an agent—a British agent—to reside at the headquarters of the State. The agent in the present case is proceeding without an army, though with an escort—an escort which I readily admit, if he is going to Lhasa without the cordial consent of the Government there, is a very necessary accompaniment. My fear is that you may be undertaking it with too small, rather than with too large a force. Those proceedings, from the beginning to the end, have always been injurious and contrary to the true interests of India, at least according to the views which ever since I paid any attention to Indian affairs I have always held, and which I think our past experience has proved to be correct. The demand for a permanent British agent at the capital of the country concerned is, I venture to think, the most fatal of all the proposals. You have sacrificed precious lives in the past. Are you going to send to Lhasa somebody else—after you have forced the people of Tibet to accept your policy—to stay there under those circumstances which have led in the past to such fatal and unhappy results? The noble Earl says that the only alternative to the policy of the Government is the policy of isolation, which, if it be accepted, would involve the fortification of the northern frontier of India. Fortify our northern frontier against whom? Does the noble Earl really think that these Tibetans are likely to invade the Empire of India? Then who are you afraid of? It is the Power, the fear of whom inspires all these proceedings of the forward policy. But do you really think that any European Power, or any Power in its senses, would ever invade India through Tibet, over the highest mountains in the world? No, my Lords, I am certain there is no European Power silly enough to try that game. The invasion, if it ever comes—and I believe it to be one of the most difficult and tremendous undertakings that could ever be entered upon by any great Power—will come from the West of India, not from the North or the East; and therefore I do most sincerely hope that, whatever may be the results of these proceedings, the noble Earl's remark with regard to the proposal to fortify——

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I apologise for interrupting the noble Marquess, but what I said was that that was an alternative policy. I said it was a policy that had never been suggested or considered by anyone.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I am quite sure that the policy never has been considered, and I am equally certain that, if it was, it never would be adopted. The noble Earl says he put it as the alternative policy. I say it is an impossible policy, and that it would be a stupid policy.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: Hear, hear!

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Then you say that the Tibetans hamper your trade. I will not go into any discussion at this moment as to the value of that trade; but it is not much. It might be developed, I quite agree. I see in the Blue-book certain representations from friends of mine at Bradford—from the Bradford Chamber of Commerce—on the subject. I do not doubt that if you establish friendly relations with Tibet you may develop your trade. But, in the first place, I would venture to say that the course which Lord Curzon wishes to pursue is not the best one for establishing friendly relations with Tibet; and, in the next place, while I desire the utmost development of our trade and commerce in every part of the world, while I admit that in these days it is a foremost duty of the Government to do all that they can to advance and develop our commerce, I hold strongly to the view that it is unjust to attempt to do it by the agency of force. I know that when I say that I am out of harmony with a considerable body of public opinion in this country, but it is my deliberate opinion, and, as it involves considerations of right and wrong, I am afraid I am not likely to change it. I have held it for a great many years. In all these cases – more, of course, now than sixty or seventy years ago—there is a strange admixture on the part of those who desire to promote the forward policy of political and trade reasons. First one is put forward, and then the other. I confess that, looking at these Papers, I believe—and I think it is consistent with the character of the noble Lord—that political considerations weigh most with Lord Curzon; but as in these days those considerations have not the force they had at one time with public opinion, trade considerations are added to them, but that does not, in my opinion, change the fundamental error of a policy of this kind. You cannot by force make people your friends. If you get to Lhasa and force your treaty upon the Tibetan people you will throw their sympathies in the opposite direction. Instead of coming down to the South they will turn to the North. You say that they have threatened to do so already. I dare say they have. The noble Earl shakes his head. I understood him to say that what they felt was that if we attacked them they had Russia behind them. If it is not so I am very glad.

I have said that up to a certain time, even indeed to a late period, it would be quite correct to say that the policy of His Majesty's Government at home was very much in accordance with the policy of my noble friend Lord Elgin. I think we owe much gratitude to Lord George Hamilton for the manner in which he steadily resisted the proposals for advance which came from the Government of India. He fought a long and a firm battle. At the last moment, under circumstances, no doubt, of considerable difficulty, he did give a certain kind of consent to a portion of Lord Curzon's proposals, though not, I think, to his general policy in regard to this question. I know, of course, that it is very difficult for a Secretary of State for India to resist perpetually and continually the pressure and the demands of the Government of India. I have myself been both Secretary of State for India and Viceroy of India, and so I speak with a certain impartiality in regard to the matter; but this I will say, that while I have always thought that it was a sound principle that in almost all matters of internal administration the Secretary of State should leave the largest discretion to the Viceroy in Council, I draw this broad distinction—and I think the noble Marquess will agree with me—that the Government at home are bound to exercise a close control over any matters which relate to international affairs. Therefore Lord George Hamilton was fully justified in resisting these proposals as he did. At the same time, I quite understand how difficult it may have been to him to fight the battle to the last.

What you have to look at in this case and in all these cases is, that once you embark on this forward policy you are pushed on step by step. Colonel Younghusband goes forward; he occupies the Chumbi Valley; he presses for advance, and step by step you are brought to a position in which I quite admit resistance is very difficult. Lord George Hamilton, after he had sent that last telegram, retired from office. I am not going to make any hostile criticism in regard to Mr. Brodrick's proceedings; but I am sorry to see that he has gone further than Lord George Hamilton even in his last telegram. Mr. Brodrick shows, by his telegrams, that he desires to restrain Lord Curzon from his proposed advance as much as possible, and in that respect he is right. But the difficulty is that when you have got a considerable way into Tibetan country it becomes exceedingly difficult, unless special circumstances should arise, to call a halt, and to go back. I do think that there are at the present moment circumstances which call loudly for the suspension of these proceedings, and that is the reason why I think my noble friend Lord Reay has done good service in bringing this subject before your Lordships' notice at the present time. The state of affairs in the Far East is so critical as to make any step on the part of the Government of India of much greater importance and more liable to create difficulties than it would be under ordinary conditions. I suppose it is our policy to maintain the integrity and independence of China, and to set ourselves, so far as we can, against any step on the part of any Power to interfere with that independence or threaten that integrity. It behoves us, therefore, to be very careful that at such a moment we do not give an opportunity to any other Power to say that we are interfering with China, or threatening the independence of any portion of her country. I know very well that His Majesty's Government have no intention whatever, according to their declarations—and I believe them to be perfectly sincere—of occupying Tibet, of annexing Tibet, or of interfering with the suzerainty of China over Tibet. But, my Lords, we had yesterday very curious proof of the statements which are made by those whom the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty very rightly referred to as persons animated by hostility to this country. We know how they have been seizing of late, on the most unfounded grounds, every opportunity that they could find of attempting to embroil us with Russia. Surely it would be highly inadvisable that at such a moment as this you should give any opportunity for the circulation of false statements as to our intentions in regard to Tibet. I cannot think of anything that might be likely to lead to more serious difficulties for His Majesty's Government than to create, at a time when the Russian people are naturally excited about the present war, any idea that we were attempting to steal a march upon them, and to undertake arrangements with Tibet which they would think in any way threatening to them. They have no right there; our right there is a little shadowy; but, whatever that may be, the Russians have no right there at all. I say that broadly and distinctly; but, nevertheless, they have an interest there, and I think it is a great mistake to proceed with this policy at this time. It would be insane to attempt to stretch the frontiers of India in that direction. To the north-east of India you have a great mountain barrier. Keep behind that barrier; do not attempt to go beyond it, and you will be safe. No one will invade you over those mountains, and India is quite large enough without any further extension of her frontier.

There is only one more point with which I would trouble your Lordships, and which the noble Earl who has just sat down naturally did not allude to—I mean the communication which is to be found in the noble Marquess's despatch to Mr. Spring-Rice in regard to his conversation with Count Benckendorff. I do not wish to ask for any information that it might be contrary to the public interest to give; but as the noble Marquess has thought fit to include a statement of that conversation in these Papers and in his letter to Mr. Spring-Rice there is no contradiction, that I can find, as to the accuracy of the statement made by Count Benckendorff—the House, I am sure, would be very glad if he would give as much information as he properly can in regard to the nature of those prospective negotiations to which Count Benckendorff alluded.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I am afraid I owe some apology to your Lordships for intervening even for a moment in a debate which would seem naturally to be confined to the Indian potentates of this House. But the Papers which have been presented to Parliament have impressed my mind with a very deep sense of the gravity of this question—one which cannot be discussed quite fully in public, but which at any rate bears in its circumstances so melancholy a resemblance to that first war in Afghanistan which was conducted under the late Lord Lytton, that it must give all those whose minds and memories recur to the past, serious grounds of misgiving when they see once more His Majesty's Government proceeding in the same direction to an end which, I venture to say, they cannot see themselves. And here I must express my difference from one remark in the speech to my noble friend who has just sat down. He urges on the Government with great emphasis, and with all the authority of an ex-Viceroy of India, that these operations should now be suspended and withdrawn. I do not say that I wish that that were not possible, but I am convinced that things have gone so far that it is no longer possible. The mission having been sent out, for good or for evil, it must not be recalled without some substantive result and without leaving some firm impression on the Tibetan mind and imagination which may secure, at any rate to some extent, the object which the Government have in view.

I confess I am surprised at the speech of the Under-Secretary, who endeavoured to found an argument of continuity of policy with regard to Tibet which seemed to lead us into the regions of fancy and to neglect that firm rock of historical fact which is so necessary in a statement of this kind. The noble Earl alluded to the mission of Bogle, under the auspices of Warren Hastings, and the subsequent mission of Turner to Shigatse. Then he went to the mission of Mr. Macaulay in 1885, and said that there was a continuity of policy on the part of Governments since the time of Warren Hastings. But he omits to note the fact that there is a gap of at least a century. He takes two isolated dates separated by a century and imagines that there was a continuity of policy with regard to Tibet between those two dates. I venture to say that, broadly speaking, the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to Tibet between those two dates was a policy of respecting the isolation of Tibet, and of not endeavouring in any way to interfere in its autonomy and separate existence. A gap of a century is a serious thing in a continuity of policy which only began towards the end of the 18th century, and I do not think that the claim is sufficiently substantiated by the facts the noble Earl brought forward. He referred to the mission of Mr. Macaulay. Now I remember that expedition very well. I did not know that it was going to be referred to, or I should have rubbed up my recollections, but in any case I remember enough to state certain broad facts. The mission of Mr. Macaulay was the hobby of two very gifted men who have now both passed away; one was Mr. Macaulay himself, and the other was Lord Randolph Churchill. Lord Randolph Churchill was greatly set on this expedition, and Mr. Macaulay, a very gifted man, persuaded him that in the interests of British commerce such an expedition was necessary. The noble Earl says that the expedition would have taken place at the invitation—or with the sanction, was it?—of the Chinese Government.

THE EARL OF **HARDWICKE**: With the authority.

THE EARL OF **ROSEBERY**: I think that is very possibly true. The Chinese Government is a weak Government, with an authority which it cannot always vindicate—especially, as the Blue-book shows, in Tibet—and it may have given its authority to that expedition. But I was in office in the succeeding year, and had to deal with the Chinese Government in a convention in respect of Burma, which was of great importance to us for securing our rights and authority in that province. I shall never forget the anguish, if I may use the expression, with which the Chinese Government pressed on us the abandonment of that expedition; and the abandonment of that expedition was one of the main factors in securing that convention, so much importance did the Chinese Government, which had given a nominal sanction to it a year before, attach to its abandonment. And why did the Chinese Government attach so much importance to its abandonment? Because it knew very well what is the position of Tibet. The position of Tibet is unique. It is the most interesting country left in the world; it is a huge monastery inhabited by a nation of monks, with a subject population inhabiting the most inhospitable region in the world, in the worst climate which is habitable by human beings. These people have secured their isolation not for centuries but for tens of centuries; and it has been the policy of their neighbours to respect that isolation, partly I hope from sentiments of veneration and the traditions of antiquity, and partly owing to the very undesirable nature of the country which they inhabit.

There is little or no commerce to be got out of Tibet. My noble friend, with the impulse of a generous nature, said that our commerce might be extended. Our commerce undoubtedly could be extended there, because it is not so great that it is unsusceptible of expansion. It is of the most meagre kind. But when you come to wish to expand a commerce of a narrow kind in a country which does not want you or your commerce, it is wise to count the cost. If I were a hostile critic, which I am not, of the attitude taken up in these Papers, if I wanted to bring the whole matter into ridicule, I should say that the readers of these Papers who were not behind the scenes, would gather that the whole object of the policy of the Indian Government in what they have done was to make people drink Indian tea who did not like Indian tea and did not want Indian tea. I venture to say that the first hundred pages or something like that of this Blue-book are devoted entirely to the desire and ambition of the Indian Government to impose the drinking of Indian tea on a people which prefers Chinese tea.

There are, no doubt, other causes which are urged as grounds for the expedition which has been sent. There is the neglect of the Sikkim Treaties; there is the destruction of two posts; there is the capture of two dubious and anonymous British subjects. When we think of how many hundreds of millions of British subjects there are in India, it is somewhat difficult to trace who these British subjects are. But what I venture to say of all these causes is that they are very suitable causes for a quarrel if you want to pick one, but they are not causes for a great nation to embark in an unknown expedition of this kind without the gravest reasons of another kind which they do not put forward. I am the more strengthened in this opinion because it is the opinion of His Majesty's Government. I do not know whether it is possible to put the case of the Government in a more terse and admirable way than it is put in the despatch of Lord George Hamilton, who we lament for so many reasons is no longer a Minister of the Crown. He there says that—

> "In the event of coercion becoming necessary the military situation will have to be considered. The proposal to advance far into the interior is regarded with grave misgiving by His Majesty's Government, who are disposed to think that the fact that we are in earnest may be sufficiently brought home to the Tibetans by the occupation of the Chumbi Valley in the first instance."

That is the last reluctant struggle of the home Government against an imperious Viceroy. Unfortunately, the sands of Lord George Hamilton's Ministry were running extremely low, and in the last ten days of September—I do not remember if he had then vacated his office—a change of attitude took place. On the 1st of October the Indian Secretary telegraphs that His Majesty's Government, having again considered the position—

> "Are now prepared, if the complete rupture of negotiations prove inevitable, to authorise not only the occupation of the Chumbi Valley, but also the advance, if it can be made with safety, of the mission to Gyangtse."

That was the surrender of His Majesty's Government, as it seems to me, to the Viceroy; and I think if any one looks through the Blue-book up to that point, and particularly after the despatch on page 150, which is the most explicit of the despatches in which Lord Curzon lays down his policy, he will agree with me in thinking that it was with the greatest possible reluctance and only in, I will not say obedience, but in deference, to the strong and energetic impulsion of Lord Curzon that this policy was ever adopted. There is only one other remark which I have to make with regard to this Blue-book. It is with regard to the transaction with Russia. We are always in a state of great suspicion of Russia and Russia is always in a state of not less complete suspicion of ourselves. I cannot find the reference in the Blue-book at this moment, but assurances were given to the Russian Government which seemed to cover a denial of our expedition into Tibet, and almost immediately afterwards we received the announcement from India that the expedition to Tibet was taking place. It is almost needless to say that our assurance was given in perfect good faith; but, at the same time, it is unfortunate that it should have been given so short a time—only a fortnight, I think—before the expedition took place.

I have said that I do not think there is anything in the Papers which really justifies the despatch of this expedition into Tibet, unless for other reasons you wished to send one there. Some of the arguments of Colonel Younghusband are not entitled to serious attention. He addresses them to the Tibetans, whose intellects he evidently does not rate very highly; and when they complain of his advance with an armed escort, which, of course, is necessary under the circumstances, into their territory to negotiate, Colonel Younghusband seeks to reassure them by telling them that they are hospitably received in Indian territory when they come to negotiate. But he forgets to mention the important and indispensable difference between the two cases, for when the Tibetans have come into Indian territory they have come there by invitation, and in this case our troops certainly have not gone there on invitation. There is only one justification, in my judgment, for the policy of His Majesty's Government, and that is the question, which I know must be treated with the greatest delicacy, of whether there is any understanding between Russia and Tibet which might be of a character dangerous to our interests in Asia. I am not one of those who hold that because the Asiatic dominions of Russia are a thousand miles from Tibet that altogether deprives the relations of Russia and Tibet of their significance or might render them quite harmless to our interests in that region. My view is founded on this—that the authority of the Lama is not a secular but a spiritual one. That is the reason why the Chinese, I suspect, attach so much importance to their connection with the Lama and their connection with Tibet; and I am not learned enough to know how far that spiritual authority of the Dalai Lama really extends through China and the Asiatic dominions of Russia. But it does, no doubt, extend to a very considerable region; and therefore the Dalai Lama and his authority is to Russia, and it is to ourselves, as it is to China, a matter of great significance and importance.

Now, of course, I accept the denial of the Russian Government that there is no agreement or treaty between Russia and Tibet. There is an article in one of the monthly magazines, I think it is the *Contemporary Review*, signed by a name which is not known to me, which categorically states that such a treaty has been signed and that a friend of the author's was actually present at the signature. I can attach no authority to a statement of that kind where I do not know the position of the person who makes it; but I must say that I attach considerable weight to the Tibetan Embassy to St. Petersburg. The Tibetan Embassy to St. Petersburg, from the very reason of distance, seems to me to have been an act unwarranted by considerations of neighbourly amity, which therefore assumes a political significance which it is not very easy to overlook. I do not think there is anything in the Blue-book beyond the Tibetan Embassy which need cause us serious disquietude with regard to the relations of Russia and Tibet. The boast of the Tibetans that was quoted by the Under-Secretary is, I think, a boast which was simply related by Colonel Younghusband as a matter of gossip, and is, after all, even if used, probably a matter, may I say of bluff, to which it is not necessary to attach any serious importance. The Tibetan Embassy to St. Petersburg is, I think, a serious symptom; and if the noble Marquess can, without indiscretion, give us any information as to that most material point with regard to our whole Tibetan policy—the relations of Russia and Lhasa—I confess I shall be very glad that this discussion has taken place.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the noble Marquess who spoke last but one delivered an eloquent speech in condemnation of a policy that His Majesty's Government have not only not adopted, but, in the pages of this Blue-book, have gone out of their way to disclaim. The noble Marquess has discovered in Lord Curzon's Tibetan policy an example of that forward policy which he so greatly abhors, and which he so often and so earnestly decries. I have often heard policies denounced as being illustrations of a forward policy which did not appear to me in the least to deserve to be so stigmatised. In this case I think the expression is very much misapplied. This Blue-book sets out clearly the circumstances under which we became involved in this Tibetan difficulty, and I am bound to say that I believe you may search history in vain for a case in which a powerful and civilised Power has dealt more patiently or more indulgently with a barbarous or semi-barbarous neighbour. There have been two questions between ourselves and the Tibetans—the question of trade and the question of frontier. I will freely admit that, to my mind, the question of trade deserves a secondary place only in these transactions. I do not, on the other hand, wish to treat considerations founded upon the development of trade with disrespect; because we who have been at the Foreign Office know very well that our fellow-countrymen regard it as one of the principal duties belonging to us to see that no efforts are spared to develop the trade of this country in all parts of the world, and we are, rightly I think, taken to task whenever we neglect such an opportunity.

But it is quite true that in this case the trade for which we are struggling is not a very extensive or valuable trade. At any rate, I entirely agree with the noble Marquess and the noble Earl on the Cross Benches when they repudiate the idea of endeavouring to force trade, whether it be extensive or not extensive, at the point of the bayonet, upon people who do not want to trade with us. The question of the frontier is of an entirely different nature. I think it must be borne in upon us that in many parts of the world these frontier questions are forced upon us in circumstances from which there is no escape. If you have two uncivilised countries conterminous, they rather like not to have a settled frontier; you will find that certain regions belong at one time to one Power and at another to its neighbour, and sometimes they even owe allegiance simultaneously to two different Powers. But these arrangements are not convenient or acceptable when an uncivilised country marches with a civilised Power; and that is the case which confronts us in Tibet. Is it the case, as the noble Earl who introduced this subject suggests, that we have dealt with this frontier question in a spirit other than a spirit of patience and conciliation? I say the whole history of this transaction is a history of British patience and forbearance.

I will not go over the events as they were described to the House by my noble friend Lord Hardwicke; but your Lordships will remember that after the invasion of Sikkim by Tibet in 1886—I see the noble Lord puts on an expression of astonishment, but in 1886, the Tibetans did invade Sikkim and occupied a position twelve miles on the Sikkim side of the frontier. When that invasion occurred, there was no impatience shown on our side. We gave them two years grace before we turned them out, as we were obliged to turn them out, at the point of the bayonet. From that time it was our object to make a friendly and neighbourly arrangement with the Tibetans, and such an arrangement was attempted in 1890, when the convention of that year was entered into. On that occasion, again, we were careful to avoid forcing our trade upon the Tibetans, because, whereas we insisted upon an immediate settlement with regard to the frontier, we allowed the question of trade to stand over for the time, and no attempt was made to deal with it until 1893. I think it was the noble Earl on the Cross Benches who said that the policy of the Indian Government was to be explained by their desire to force Indian tea upon Tibetan consumers. So little was that the case that in 1893, at the request of the Chinese, with whom we were then negotiating, we dropped the question of tea, for I, think, no less than five years.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: That was under the late Government.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am merely showing that our policy with regard to trade has been a policy of patience and conciliation. What was our reward for this patience? The boundary pillars were destroyed; and not only was trade not allowed to us, but the Tibetans came down and built a wall close to the spot at which they had engaged that a trade mart should be established. We have heard of tariff walls, but this was not a tariff wall, it was a stone wall. It was because of the failure of this policy of patience that His Majesty's Government reluctantly came to the conclusion that it was necessary to accept the suggestion of the Government of India and to have recourse to a more vigorous policy. The conditions under which we agreed to that policy are set out in this Blue-book; and I must say I do not think that anything could have been more careful than the limitations and precautions subject to which that policy was sanctioned.

The noble Lord asked us to explain what it was that Colonel Younghusband's mission was intended to obtain for us. I will answer that question. The convention of 1890 was repudiated by the Tibetans upon the ground that they had not been properly consulted with regard to it. As a matter of fact, I believe that a Tibetan official accompanied the Chinese Amban who negotiated the treaty, but they have persistently repudiated these obligations. We desire that a new convention should be entered into between the Government of India on the one hand, and the Tibetans and the Chinese, as the suzerain Power, upon the other. That is the object of this mission, and we intend to attain it. As to the aggressive tendencies which we are alleged to have exhibited, I cannot help thinking that we have a right to call, if I may say so, as witnesses to character, the representatives of the two adjoining States of Nepal and Bhotan, whose attitude has been referred to during the course of this debate. Bhotan is an independent State immediately adjoining the Indian frontier. I believe we pay a small subsidy to the Bhotanese Government, but we never interfere with them. In the same way Nepal is an independent State. We keep an agent there. But there is no interference with internal Nepalese affairs, with the result that we are on most friendly terms with that State, and we are allowed to recruit within it those gallant Gurkha soldiers who add so much to the strength of the Indian Army. It is perfectly clear that if we have been able to maintain this sort of relations with Bhotan and Nepal, it is not necessary to impute to us sinister designs upon our Tibetan neighbours.

The noble Lord who spoke first referred to the relations of Tibet with China, and quoted and condemned very roundly Lord Curzon's statement that the suzerainty of China over Thibet might be regarded as a constitutional fiction. Lord Curzon, in the words which follow, explains very distinctly what he meant by that statement. Lord Curzon says that what he calls this constitutional fiction—

> "Has been maintained only because of its convenience to both parties. China is always ready to break down the barriers of ignorance and obstruction and to open Tibet to the civilising influence of trade; but her pious wishes are defeated by the short-sighted stupidity of the Lamas. In the same way Tibet is only too anxious to meet our advances, but she is prevented from doing so by the despotic veto of the suzerain. This solemn farce has been re-enacted with a frequency that seems never to deprive it of its attractions or its power to impose."

That is a perfectly accurate account of the value for all practical purposes of the suzerainty of China when you come to attempt to make it a basis for dealing with the Tibetans. But such as the suzerainty of China is, we desire to respect it; we do not wish to minimise it. On the contrary, we have throughout these long negotiations constantly leant on the suzerainty of China, and spared no pains to carry the Chinese Government with us at every step. At this moment whatever is being done in Tibet is being done with the knowledge and concurrence of the Chinese Government. They are not always punctual in their arrangements; their representatives do not always arrive on the scene at the hour when they are most wanted. But that does not in the least affect the accuracy of my statement that the Chinese Government is a party to the transactions now in progress.

I now come to a much more delicate and difficult subject which has been touched upon by speakers to-night—I mean the relations between Tibet and Russia. The attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to this question is, I think, explained with sufficient clearness in the despatches published in the Blue-book and giving an account of the communications that passed between the representative of the Russian Government and the representative of the British Foreign Office. I do not desire to add to or to take away from what was stated in these despatches. Our view is that the independence of Tibet should be recognised, but that if any other Power is to exercise a preponderance in that country, that Power can only be Great Britain. We have made that sufficiently clear, and I will not attempt to labour the point; the more so, because, whether there had been any question of communications between Russia and Tibet or not, it would, in my belief, have been none the less necessary that some step should be taken to bring the Tibetan Government to reason. What seems to me to aggravate our difficulties in this case is not so much anything which the Russian Government has done, as what the

Tibetans imagine the Russian Government to intend or to have in contemplation. The Russian Government have given us distinct, and, I am bound to say, in my opinion, satisfactory assurances with regard to their policy towards Tibet. I do not desire to call these assurances in question. Nor do I for a moment attach credence to the idle rumours which reach us from time to time as to the presence of large bodies of Russian troops or of Russians of any kind at that mysterious capital, Lhasa. But the evidence is indisputable to show that the Tibetans, who are a people very ignorant and very easily imposed upon, are deeply convinced that they may count upon Russian support, and it is that most unfortunate misapprehension—for I believe it to be an entire misapprehension—which has so much intensified their opposition to us and added so much to our difficulties.

The noble Marquess asked me a distinct Question arising out of the despatch written by myself to Mr. Spring-Rice on 17th November, and printed on page 298 of the Blue-book. He called attention to the fact that in this despatch the Russian Ambassador was said to have observed to me that it was most unfortunate that at the present moment, when the Russian Government were, as I was aware, disposed to enter into amicable discussion of our relations at various points where British and Russian interests came in contact, an event of this kind, meaning the Tibetan Mission, should have occurred. I understood the noble Marquess to invite me to tell him what it was that that observation pointed to. The observation had no reference to Tibetan affairs; but it had reference to conversations which had taken place upon more than one occasion between myself and his Excellency, in the course of which he had dwelt upon the great advantage which would result to both our countries from a better and more frank understanding in regard to the numerous points at which, in different parts of the world, our interests come in contact. I need not say that I received that statement with the cordiality which it deserved. I am glad to recall it now, and I hope I may be allowed to say how readily His Majesty's Government would recur to the subject at some time happier and more opportune than the present.

I can only say in conclusion that we have undertaken this Tibetan mission with the utmost reluctance, and that we determined to take it, not because we desired abruptly to change our policy or to abandon that which had been pursued by Lord Elgin, or even that which had been pursued by ourselves, as shown by the documents contained in the earlier part of the Blue-book, but because we were profoundly convinced that the other policy, after a long and conscientious trial, had completely failed, that China had shown herself powerless to bring about a more satisfactory condition of affairs between ourselves and Tibet, that the Tibetans were quite unable to understand the complaisance and indulgence with which we had treated them, and that the policy which had been described as a policy of patience and conciliation had been exhausted. In these circumstances, no other course seemed open to us but to adopt the line of action recommended to us by the Government of India; and your Lordships may certainly depend upon it that we shall pursue that line of action with the caution and the discretion which under any circumstances it would have been our duty to observe, but which, in consideration of the present condition of international affairs, it is doubly our duty to keep strictly before our view.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): Does the noble Lord withdraw his Motion?

*LORD REAY: No. I understand there is no objection to giving further Papers.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: The Blue-book already published contains the latest Papers, and others will be given when they come to hand. I think the noble Lord will be satisfied with that assurance.

*LORD REAY: Certainly. I beg leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

GRIEVANCES OF RESERVE OFFICERS.

LORD ROSMEAD: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War—(1) Whether the Committee appointed by the late Secretary of State for War to inquire into the whole subject of the grievances of the Reserve officers who were called up for service during the late war in South Africa, has yet made its Report; and (2.) whether the said Report, if made, or when made, together with the proceedings, will be laid on the Table of the House. I have on two former occasions brought to the notice of your Lordships the decided disparity between the treatment of the two classes of Reserve officers called up for service in the late war, and therefore I need not now take up your Lordships' time by repeating what I have already said. My reason for asking this Question is that on 7th August last the noble Earl who was at that time Under-Secretary of State for War intimated to your Lordships, in reply to a Question which I submitted, that the Report of the Committee which the late Secretary of State for War had appointed to inquire into the whole subject of the grievances of Reserve Officers would shortly be published. The announcement of the appointment of this Committee was made to your Lordships on 11th May last by the noble Earl, but I have been unable to ascertain anything whatever about the Committee or its Report. There is a very strong impression prevalent among Reserve officers that the Committee in question has either unaccountably delayed its investigations, or that if it has made its Report it has done so without an exhaustive examination of the case. I attribute this view to the refusal of the War Office authorities to accept the evidence which many of the pensioned Reserve officers volunteered to give before the Committee.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, the noble Lord appears to be under a misapprehension as to the exact purposes for which the Committee was appointed. The Committee was not appointed to inquire into the grievances of Reserve officers during the late war. It was appointed to inquire into the whole question as to the past, present, and future re-employment of Reserve officers in time of war. The Committee has made its Report, but no decision has as yet been come to as to whether the Report will be adopted or not. I am unable to say, therefore, whether it will be laid on the Table of the House, nor can I give any pledge to that effect. It may interest the noble Lord, however, to know that the Committee did emphatically report against making any of their proposals retrospective. As regards the proceedings of the Committee, they can never be laid on the Table, as no shorthand notes were taken.

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 26*th February*, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Barnet District Gas and Water Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Felixstowe Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill; Whitby Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments;

Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Southend Water Bill. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time.

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill. Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLLING).

Petitions from Deptford, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Blaenau Festiniog; Llanfrothen; Trawsfynydd; Cambridge; Kentish Town; Ilfracombe; Sheepbridge; Collyhurst; Leigh; Neath; Bwlchgwyn; Stockton-upon-Tees; Bury; Selly Oak; Bournbrook; Halesowen; Worcester; Everton; Putney; Dunstable; Compstall; Blænwenen; Blackwood; New Tredegar; Nantyglo; Abertillery; Maesteg; Peckham; Rhymney; Liverpool; Southgate; Shrewsbury; Middleton; Llanelly; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Gloucester, against; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIONS (NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES COMPANY'S FACTORY, UPTON TOWANS, CORNWALL).

Copy presented, of Report by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the precipitating and final washing houses of the factory of the National Explosives Company, Limited, at Upton Towans, Hayle, Cornwall, on the 5th January, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-sixth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Copy presented, of the Electoral Act, No. XXXV., of 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CROFTER AND COTTAR COLONISATION SCHEME.

Copy presented, of Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners appointed to carry out a scheme of colonisation in the Dominion of Canada of crofters and cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Naval Gun Sights.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state whether the sights of H.M.S. "Prince of Wales" proved satisfactory during this vessel's recent gun trials.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The sights of H.M.S. "Prince of Wales" are quite satisfactory, but they were not tested for accuracy during the recent gun trials, the primary object of these trials being to test the strength and working of the mountings. Accuracy tests of sights are carried out in dry dock, which affords a far better means for proving their accuracy.

Workmen's Compensation—Amendment of Law.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he hopes to introduce the Bill to amend the law of workmen's compensation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I cannot fix a date for the introduction of this Bill. The Committee whom I appointed to advise me in the matter are hard at work, and have I understand, nearly concluded the taking of evidence. They will lose no time in considering their Report.

Extension of Workmen's Compensation Act.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is yet in a position to state to what trades the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act will be extended.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) This is one of the matters now under the consideration of the Departmental Committee which I appointed to advise me on the subject of the amendment of the Act. I can make no statement with regard to it at present.

Estate of the late Thomas Flynne.

MR. O'DOWD, (Sligo, S): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will ascertain from the American Consul when the estate of the late Thomas Flynne, who died in Warwick, Rhode Island, in February, 1902, will be available for distribution amongst his next of kin, who are British subjects residing in Glasgow.

(*Answered by Earl Percy*) The case has not been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State, but inquiries will be made.

Exports of Coal into France.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if he will state what was the amount of coal exported from the United Kingdom to France in the years 1902 and 1903, respectively; and what was the amount of German coal imported into France in the same periods.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The total quantity of coal exported from the United Kingdom to France in 1902 was 7,408,000 tons and in 1903 6,976,000 tons. The total quantity of coal imported into France from Germany in 1902 was 1,013,000 tons and in 1903 1,054,000 tons.

Produce of Coal Export Duty.

MR. RUNCIMAN: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what was the produce of the export duty on coal in the years 1901–2 and 1902–3, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The net produce of the export duty on Coal in the financial years 1901–2 and 1902–3 was £1,311,706 and £1,991,767 respectively.

Coal Export Duty.

MR. RUNCIMAN: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, owing to the shilling export duty on coal, the producers of small coal have been compelled to sell it abroad at 6s., whereas, in innumerable instances, but for the export duty on coal, its export market value would have been 6s. 6d. to 6. 9d.; and whether, in these circumstances, he intends to retain the duty in its present form.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I have no official information which would enable me to reply to the earlier part of the hon. Member's Question. As regards the latter part, I am not prepared to anticipate the Budget discussions.

Dogs Bill.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, when the Dogs Bill will be printed and issued to Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) I understand from my noble friend that he expects this Bill to be delivered to Members early in the coming week.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. MOUNT (Berkshire, Newbury) said he had to claim the indulgence of the

House, which was always accorded to those Members who intervened for the first time in debates in the House of Commons. The Musical Copyright Bill, the Second Reading of which he was about to move, enforced rights of which the House had already approved. This Bill introduced no new principles and established no new privileges. It inflicted no disabilities on those who endeavoured to keep within the spirit of the law, and its aim was to provide proper safeguards for rights which had already been sanctioned. He did not think he needed to labour the point that the same right of property belonged to copyright in music as to copyright in books and other things. Already the owners of musical copyright had been given the same benefits as was given to owners of literary copyright. In the Copyright Act of 1842, the House gave the owners of musical copyright the same privileges and benefits as the owners of literary copyright, and they were placed upon the same level. He would further point out that these rights and privileges given by the House to musical copyright were real and not imaginary rights, because in that Act remedies were given to enable those rights to be enforced, and means were provided to prevent any infringement or infraction of that right. That Act gave the best remedies that could be provided at that time. He would endeavour to show to the House that the intention that musical copyright should be placed upon the same level as literary copyright had never been reached. An Act was passed in 1902, which had for its aim and object the restraining of action which was undermining the rights recognised by Parliament. Until two years ago practically the only remedy which owners of a musical copyright had against infringement was an action for an injunction, and that remedy was found to be inadequate on account of the standing of the ordinary offender. Piracies, as they were all aware, had increased enormously, he did not need to labour that point. Why this was so it was not for him to say, but he thought the reason would probably be found in the fact that these musical pirates had discovered a very easy method of breaking the law without running much risk of bringing themselves within the arms of the law. The remedy was a civil action, but it was obvious that this was a quite inadequate remedy against those people who were breaking the law. Civil action was inadequate, because the hawkers who were selling copies of copyright music were men of straw, and it was useless to attempt to bring any civil action against people of that stamp.

The Act of 1902, therefore, was intended to put a stop to the infringement from which owners of musical copyright suffered. Under that Act a further advance was made beyond civil action, and power was given to a constable, in certain cases and under certain circumstances, to seize pirated copies and take them to the police court for destruction. That Act pointed clearly to the fact that Parliament at that time intended to protect the right in musical copyright, but that was about as far as the Act went. The Act was, unfortunately, a failure, and although it was passed with the object of putting a stop to this sort of proceeding they found that immediately following the passing of that Act the number of pirated copies sold greatly increased. In fifteen months after the passing of the Act no less than 468,000 copies of pirated music were seized by the police, and that was only a very small proportion of the number published and sold. What was more remarkable still was that in 1901 there were only forty-seven pirated editions known, but in 1903 the number of pirated editions had increased to 231. Whatever was the intention of the Act of 1902 that Act had failed, and he did not think the causes of the failure of that Act were very far to seek. Under the Act the constable might take to the Court the copies which he had seized, but it was held that unless a summons had been served on the person in whose possession they were found the copies could not be destroyed. As the alleged owner in ninety-nine cases out of every 100 was an itinerant hawker with no settled place of abode, he might quite honestly give a common lodging-house as his address, and the evidence given before the Departmental Committee showed that in many cases these itinerant hawkers gave false and wrong addresses. Out of 5,000 summonses issued against musical pirates at the instance of the Musical Copyright Association they were only able to serve 287. Then, again, although 468,000 copies of pirated music had been seized, only 57,000 had been ordered to be destroyed. Therefore, it was necessary that something should be done to remedy this state of things. It might be said that the loss to the hawkers was the same whether the copies were destroyed or not, but he contended that this increase in piriacy showed that some other penalty was necessary. No doubt hon. Members had noticed that these hawkers carried very few copies with them at one time, and he was informed that arrangements were often made between the hawkers and the middlemen that no charge should be made for copies seized by the police, and consequently in many cases no loss whatever fell upon the hawkers. It was clearly obvious that some penalty ought to be inflicted. But there was another person in a much larger way of business than the hawker who ought to be dealt with, namely, the printer and the distributor, in whose premises the pirated copies were stored. They were not touched by the Act now in force and they carried on their work with very little chance of detection. It had been held that the Act of 1902 conferred no power of search so long as the business was conducted within closed and locked doors, but these persons were really more culpable than the hawkers in the street. Those were the main defects which had shown themselves in the Act of 1902. The penalties were not severe enough to be felt by the itinerant hawker, and some further power was wanted to get hold of those who evaded summonses, and to render amenable to the law those who were now able to avoid detection. He wanted the House to consider how far those defects were removed in the Bill he recommended to the House.

The present Bill followed on the lines of the Fine Arts Copyright Act of 1862, and made it an offence for any person to print or cause or procure to be printed, any pirated musical works or to distribute or carry about any copies of any pirated musical work for the purpose of sale or of being dealt with in the course of trade. It also made it an offence for any person to solicit orders by post or to import or export copies of pirated music or to be found in the possession of any plates from which such copies were to be printed. Those offences, it was proposed, should be punishable by fine or imprisonment before a court of summary jurisdiction. The second clause gave power to the police to take into custody without a warrant any person who, within the view of the police, committed an offence under the Act, and whose name was unknown and could not reasonably be ascertained by the constable. This procedure was similar to that adopted under the Police Act of 1839, and was recommended by the Departmental Committee which dealt with this question. He did not think this clause would be dissented from even by the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark. He would point out that the majority Report of the Departmental Committee recommended it, and that Committee had as its Chairman Mr. Fenwick, whose great experience as a metropolitan police court magistrate ought to have considerable weight with the House on this question. The evidence went to show that this clause was not likely to inflict any injury or hardship. If a man was arrested he would be taken to the police station, and if he was an honest man he did not think there would be any difficulty in persuading the inspector that he would be forthcoming when the case was tried. There still remained the difficulty in regard to those who were not less culpable, but who were in a larger way of business. Under Clause 3 power was given to issue a search warrant where—

> "There are reasonable grounds for believing that pirated copies of such musical work or the plates thereof are being kept for purposes constituting an offence under this Act."

It is also provided that—

> "The Court may, by warrant, authorise any police constable named and referred to in such warrant to enter such house, premises, or place at any time between the hours of nine in the morning and six in the afternoon, and to search for and seize and carry away such copies and plates and any other copies of pirated musical works or plates kept as aforesaid."

The hours of search had been limited to between nine in the morning and six in the afternoon, and this clause relating to the search warrant followed the precedent of a similar clause in the Merchandise Marks Act of 1887. The evidence showed that if power was taken in the Act to deal with the hawkers in the street and to issue search warrants under certain circumstances, this traffic would probably cease. Those were briefly the suggestions embodied in the Bill and he urged the House, if they desired to put a stop to this illegal practice, to give effect to the evidence which had been tendered upon this question.

With regard to dealing with forfeited copies, as the law now stood no order could be made for their destruction without a summons. If the Bill became law as it stood it was provided under Sub-section 2 of Clause 5 that—

> "If the person alleged to have been dealing with such copies is unknown or cannot be found an information or complaint shall be laid by or on behalf of the owner of the copyright, or by his agent thereto authorised in writing, or on behalf of the police, for the purpose of enforcing the forfeiture and destruction of such copies and plates, and the Court may without summons, on proof that the musical work to which the copies or plates seized relate is pirated, or that such copies or plates were in the possession of such person under such circumstances as to constitute an offence under this Act, order such copies or plates or any of them to be forfeited and destroyed at the expiration of a period of twenty-eight days unless the rightful owner of the copies should within that time come and prove his claim to the copies."

He ventured to think that a clause of that kind would meet the difficulty without inflicting any hardship upon any innocent persons.

He wished to say a word on a question arising on the first section of the Bill. There was a provision that any person committing any offence indicated in the section—

> "Shall be deemed to have committed an offence under this Act unless he proves to the satisfaction of the Court that he did not know and could not with reasonable care have ascertained that—(*a*) such musical work was pirated; (*b*) or that such plates were the plates of pirated musical works."

The clause placed the onus of proof on the defendant. This was a matter which would be dealt with in Committee, but as it had been referred to in the Report of the Departmental Commitee he thought it right to say a word or two on it now. He would say first of all that the clause was framed in accordance with precedent. By the Police Act of 1839 a person charged with being in possession of property suspected of being stolen or unlawfully obtained must satisfy the magistrate that it came into his possession rightfully. There was another, and he ventured to say a stronger, precedent in the Merchandise Marks Act passed in 1887. When the Act of 1862 was passed this provision in regard to the onus of proof was not incorporated in it, but after twenty-five years experience it was found advisable to enact such a provision. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark had pointed out in the Minority Report that the difference between the Merchandise Marks Act and the Bill now before the House was that the object of the latter was to safeguard the interest of the owners of copyright, while the former was to safeguard the interest of the public. With all due deference he would suggest that the reason why in both cases the onus of proof was placed on the defendant and not on the prosecutor was that they dealt with matters which were particularly within the knowledge of the defendant. He knew there were some who objected to the Bill because they thought the price charged by music publishers too high. They might think that publishers were making exorbitant profits; he ventured to differ from that view, but he would leave this part of the subject to be dealt with by his hon. friend the Member for South-West Manchester, who had always taken a great interest in this matter. He had endeavoured to point out that Parliament intended to grant the right of property in copyright, and so long as such intention lasted it was, he thought, their duty to safeguard it.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) congratulated his hon. friend on the manner in which he had spoken when addressing the House for the first time in introducing this Bill. This was a measure by which it was proposed to deal effectively with a gross injustice which had been perpetrated far too long upon a law-abiding section of the community. He trusted that the House would pass the Bill, and that, despite the obstructive efforts of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, they would put an end once and for all to the abominable practice which had grown up with such rapidity in recent years. Many motives had been attributed to those who had taken an interest in this question. He was sure that the hon. Member for Mid Lanark had no financial interest, direct or indirect, in the publication of music. Nor had he himself any such interest in the matter, either as composer or publisher. His interest was that of a purchaser, and he was proud to say that he had no sordid or pecuniary benefit to derive one way or another. In June last year his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland came and told him that the publishers were in despair because the hon. Member for Mid Lanark was not only as obdurate as in previous years, but that he was blocking their Bill with even greater pertinacity than before. He endeavoured to get the hon. Member to withdraw his opposition which, he considered, was neither in the public interest nor creditable to himself. His efforts were unavailing and the session passed without any Act being placed on the Statute-book dealing with the subject. His hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill to-day had pointed out how serious the position was. It was essential, if the citizens of the country were to have confidence in the laws of the land, that some change should be made immediately in the copyright law. He took the opportunity early in the recess of presenting this view to the Prime Minister, who suggested after some discussion that the Government early this session should ask the House to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the matter. There would have been many advantages in having a Select Committee, but there was one great disadvantage. It was impossible, as experience had shown, to pass an unopposed Bill through the House dealing effectively with the subject so long as the hon. Member for Mid Lanark remained a Member of the House. That being so, it seemed to him that, if a Select Committee were to be appointed, it would take some time to hear evidence, and the probability was that there would not have been much time left in which to pass the Bill. He was sure the ingenuity of the hon. Member and his friends would have been quite sufficient to prevent the passing of the measure, which he hoped would be placed on the Statute-book before the end of the session. He, therefore, suggested to the Prime Minister that it would be advisable to have the matter dealt with more quickly, and the right hon. Gentleman agreed to the suggestion that a Departmental Committee should be appointed. He desired to associate himself entirely with everything that fell from his hon. friend, who moved the Second Reading of the Bill, with respect to the ability and courtesy with which Mr. Fenwick presided over the Committee. It was on the Report presented by the Committee that his hon. friend asked the House to pass this Bill. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark had made a great complaint that what he called the interests of the public had not been represented on the Committee.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I did not say that they were not represented on the Committee, but that there was no representation of them in the evidence. The publishers were represented —the other side was represented—but there was no witness on behalf of the public.

MR. GALLOWAY said he would read a paragraph from the separate Report by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark and leave the House to judge—

> "The evidence given disclosed the existence of another interest—that of the general public interested in the cultivation of music—an interest, however, which was not specially represented at the inquiry; which is practically ignored in the Report of the majority of the Committee; but which, nevertheless, falls to be considered in any amendment of the Law which may be deemed necessary."

The hon. Member now came forward as the great apostle of the cultivators of music, whose interest, he said, was not specially represented at the inquiry. As he himself had something to do with the appointment of the Committee he would call the attention of the House to the Gentlemen who constituted it. Mr. Fenwick, the chairman, represented more especially the Home Office; Mr. Scrutton, an eminent lawyer, was put on to represent the Board of Trade, who, curiously, had an interest in copyright. It was an extraordinary fact in connection with the public service that copyright came under the Board of Trade. What was more extraordinary was that copyright was dealt with in the Railway Department. Mr. Murray was put on the Committee to represent the publishers. He was an eminent publisher with a world-wide reputation. Then there was the hon. Member for Mid Lanark and himself. He certainly thought that they were put on to represent the general interests of the public. If he was not put on for that reason he did not know for what reason he was put on. He was quite sure if that was not the reason for the hon. Member for Mid Lanark being put on, the only other possible explanation was that the Prime Minister thought him an adequate representative of the pirates.

MR. CALDWELL: Is the hon. Member in order in attributing that motive to the Prime Minister. He suggests that the Prime Minister selected me because he considered that I would adequately represent the pirates. I venture to say that is not an observation which should be put in the Prime Minister's mouth.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not know whether it was intended as a jest or seriously, but if it was intended seriously it was certainly somewhat objectionable to suggest that the hon. Member was put on the Committee to represent the interests of the pirates.

MR. GALLOWAY said that, of course, he wished at once to withdraw the remark. He was sorry he had wounded the feelings of the hon. Member. If the hon. Member were only half as careful about the feelings of other people as he was about his own, he would have had no reason to object to the expression used. He certainly intended it as a jest. He understood that the hon. Gentleman was put on to represent the general interest of the public. The Committee took a large amount of evidence, and the result of their deliberations was presented to Parliament in the form of two Reports. He thought the House owed a deep debt of gratitude, not to himself, and he might also exclude the hon. Member opposite without wounding his feelings, to the three other gentlemen who, entirely from public spirit, served on the Committee without fee or reward. They had to give their time at a period when they could have been financially more profitably employed, and he thought their services ought not to pass unnoticed. The Reports spoke for themselves. All the other members of the Committee sincerely regretted that they were unable to carry the hon. Member for Mid Lanark with them. They endeavoured by every means in their power to obtain unanimity, and even refrained from asking questions of witnesses which might indicate antagonism to the views which the hon. Member had retained so strongly. Anyone reading the Report would see that the hon. Member showed a bias against the publishers which made the other members fearful that they would not get him to agree to their Report. The hon. Gentleman grudgingly gave a remedy, but he ought to know, if he did not already know, that his remedy would be entirely ineffectual and useless. His hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill said that copyright in music was really part and parcel of the general system of copyright in the country. Parliament gave those rights to prevent the productions of authors and composers being appropriated by third parties before those authors and composers had any fair opportunity of obtaining proper remuneration for their skill, labour, and time. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark admitted that a remedy was needed, but he would not agree to a remedy that was any good. He tried a remedy of his own in 1902, and not only did it do no good, but it did a great deal of harm. There was another reason why Parliament gave copyright rights. It was to encourage authors and composers to produce works which they otherwise would not produce unless a prospect of remuneration was secured. Surely those two objects should be respected, not only from the point of view of justice, but from a national point of view, if this nation desired to take its place among the artistic nations of the world. The author and the composer ought to have the same right given to them as is given to the owner of a watch, to use the example given by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark. It was quite right that the nation should ultimately get the benefit of an author's or a composer's brain at the end of a certain period of time, and that his work should be circulated as widely and as cheaply as possible, but he said deliberately that if authors and composers were not fairly remunerated they would turn their talents in other directions. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark desired to pose as a great supporter of cheap music. Last session he himself moved a Resolution dealing with the question of national opera and the desirability of placing music within the reach of the poorer classes. What action did the hon. Gentleman take? At 10 o'clock he drew Mr. Speaker's attention to the fact that forty Members were not present, and he is the hon. Gentleman who now comes forward and poses as being interested in increasing the knowledge of music. The deathbed repentance of the hon. Gentleman was not worth very much.

With reference to the piracy of music it began in 1901 and had been spreading ever since. His hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill said that there were now about 231 copyrights which had been pirated. The number of summonses issued was between 5,000 and 6,000, but only 287 had been served owing to the fact the hawkers had given inaccurate addresses. Only 400,000 pirated copies had been seized, whereas if they had a proper remedy the number would be infinitely greater. Messrs. Boosey & Company, one of the most eminent firms, issued twelve summonses at a cost of £500, and in only two cases did they recover any costs, and then they amounted to only £30. It cost them £500 to endeavour to protect their own property, and by the remedy offered by the hon. Gentleman opposite they were refunded to the extent of £30. Was that fair? At present the remedy was entirely ineffectual. He received a letter from the agent to Messrs. Hopwood & Crew, written only yesterday. The writer travelled all over the country and had considerable experience. He said that he knew the Musical Copyright Bill was coming on that day, and he wished to communicate an incident which happened yesterday to show the difficulty of dealing with pirates under the present law. In Cardiff a man had two shops in the market, in one of which he sold legitimate music, and in the other, which was in the gallery and which was locked up, he sold pirated music. The agent called in the aid of a constable and gave them his warrant, and requested him to seize the pirated copies which were exposed for sale. The owner of the shop defied them and threatened an action for trespass. The constable thereupon refused to act. The agent went to the chief police office and saw the chief officer, who also refused to act, as he said he was afraid of the magistrates hauling him over the coals. The agent applied for a search warrant and after he had waited an hour and a half it was refused. The man who kept the shops supplied all the gutter merchants in the town who acted as his salesmen, and ultimately it cost the agent £13 to secure the destruction of the copies which were exposed for sale. In such a state of things could it be denied that his hon. friend was justified is asking the House of Commons to apply the simple but effectual remedy proposed in the Bill? If the persons who sold pirated music were a respectable class of the community then there might be something to be said on the other side, but it was well known that they were not in any sense respectable citizens who were carrying on a respectable trade. Willats, who was called the king of the pirates, admitted that he had been summoned four or five times for selling pirated music, and that he had been fined.

Mr. CALDWELL: The man was not fined; he had to pay the costs.

Mr. GALLOWAY said he was surprised at the hon. Gentleman's want of information. Still, he was content to accept his definition of the case.

Mr. CALDWELL: I may say I know nothing whatever about this man. During the whole time of the inquiry I had no communication direct or indirect with anyone. Until his letter came before the Committee asking to be heard, I was absolutely ignorant of the existence of any pirate of the name. I think it is not fair that the hon. Member should attack me in this way.

Mr. GALLOWAY: I think it is a case of *honi soit qui mal y pense*. I did not accuse the hon. Member of having been connected with pirates. I only said he seemed to know all about them.

Mr. CALDWELL: Yes, because on the evidence laid before the Committee, it was plain what had taken place. I paid attention to what the Committee was doing.

MR. GALLOWAY: I am aware that the hon. Member did pay careful attention to what the Committee was doing. I am bound to admit that I did not stop there all the time, but I never made any suggestion that the hon. Member was in league with the pirates, and I do not do so now. I am quite prepared to accept his statement that he had no knowledge of the man Willats. At all events, that man, when he gave evidence before the Committee, admitted that he had had to pay the costs of the action which had been brought against him. Does the hon. Member defend this man seeing that, by having been called upon to pay the costs, he was shown to be in the wrong? Does the hon. Member defend him for having, under such circumstances, endeavoured to break the law of the country? If he does not, why did he interrupt me when I stated that this man had been fined; why did he seek to draw the distinction that the man had only paid the costs? I have gone into this matter thoroughly, and I know a great deal about Willats that is not to his credit; but I do not see any necessity for going into his past character now. I only ask the House to remember what sort of a man he is, so that they may know how much reliance to place upon his word. I do not believe that the House would be justified in believing him under any circumstances.

MR. GALLOWAY: I do not ask that, but perhaps the House will allow me to enlarge the knowledge of the hon. Member as to this man's real character. I will quote from the evidence which he gave. He was examined by Mr. Scrutton, and he was asked whether this was the first time he had come in conflict with the laws of this country. To that he answered—

"I do not understand."

then came the question—

"You have been imprisoned?"

and to that the answer was—

"I will tell you what it was for."

next he was asked—

"Were not Messrs. Whittinghame the prosecutors?"

and to that he replied—

"Yes."

There they had evidence that the man had been guilty of embezzlement.

MR. CALDWELL: Read the rest of it. Let the House hear his explanation.

MR. GALLOWAY: I did not want to take up the time of the House. This man pleaded guilty, and he has been imprisoned for three months for embezzlement, but, if the hon. Member is so impatient, I will read on. Am I not right in saying he pleaded guilty?

MR. CALDWELL: No, he did not.

MR. GALLOWAY: Then he was found guilty of embezzlement, and sentenced by the judge to three months imprisonment in the second division. The man certainly goes on to explain the circumstances under which he was convicted. He said that Messrs. Whittinghame owed him £25, that they were going into bankruptcy, that he collected an account from one of their customers, and informed them that he had so collected it; that no notice was taken of his having done so until after the bankruptcy, when the matter went into the hands of the Official Receiver, who wrote and told him that, if he liked to pay the money back, no more would be heard about it, but otherwise, he would be prosecuted. That letter was not produced in Court, and he had serious doubts whether it was ever written.

MR. CALDWELL: I rise to a point of order.

MR. GALLOWAY: I decline to give way to the hon. Gentleman. I really do not know why he is anxious to defend this man; it is most extraordinary on his part. All I wish the House to bear in mind is that this man was a pirate, and his position should be carefully considered before he is believed.

MR. CALDWELL here rose again.

MR. GALLOWAY: I am not going to give way to the hon. Gentleman. He will have an opportunity of placing his explanation before the House later on. I will read further what the man said in explanation. He said he did not think he had done anything wrong; he looked upon what he had collected as belonging to him. Unfortunately, however, for him the judge took a different view. Had I known that the hon. Member was going to challenge my statement on this point I should have come prepared with further facts about this man which would have put, I think, an entirely different construction upon the case. Still, I repeat that all I want the House to bear in mind is that this man, Willats, is one of the class of hawkers and pirates. The Committee also had before it Superintendent Moore, of the Police, who had had a great deal to do with this question, and had dealt with it so far as the police could possibly do anything under the existing law. He was asked a question in regard to the class of people from whom these pirates were drawn, and he informed the Committee that they were mostly of the criminal class, that they were persons who had been convicted, that they were gutter-men, that they lived in common lodging-houses, and that, consequently, there was considerable difficulty in serving summonses upon them. He also added another fact in which the House would be interested, namely, that a large number of them were foreign, alien Jews, so that, unfortunately, we in this country not only had pirates among our own countrymen, but we imported them from foreign countries. He trusted that by the end of the session the Home Office would have put a stop to that practice. In considering the remedies which they were to apply in a case like this it was well to understand the character of the people with whom they were dealing. They must apply their remedies carefully. He wished to give one or two words of personal explanation. During the Parliamentary recess he issued to every Member of the House a copy of the Bill which he proposed to introduce, with a short statement as to what the Bill was about, and he asked for assistance in obtaining a position in the ballot. The Bill was drafted before the Departmental Committee had reported, and all the remedies he suggested were remedies which had been practically agreed to by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark last session.

Mr. CALDWELL: I thought the hon. Member represented me as opposed to any remedy whatever?

Mr. GALLOWAY said he was sorry that either the hon. Gentleman had wilfully misunderstood him, or was incapable of understanding him. What he said was that the hon Member had opposed every effectual remedy that had been put forward, and that he wished to repeat. The Bill, as he had said, contained all the remedies to which the hon. Gentleman last session had agreed. He merely mentioned that in order to explain to the House why, while he was willing to try certain remedies then, he was now supporting the much more drastic remedies proposed by the hon. Member in charge of the Bill. The evidence given before the Departmental Committee had convinced him that there was no possibility of effectually dealing with the evils by the remedies which he had proposed, and he had, therefore, come to the conclusion that if they were to effectually deal with them it would be necessary to have the much more severe remedies which the Committee suggested. The evidence given before the Committee left them in no doubt whatever as to what remedies ought to be applied. One of the witnesses was Sir Harry Poland, for many years the Chief Public Prosecutor, of whom it was said that in the whole course of his experience he had never once been known to prosecute a prisoner unfairly. If that were true, and he believed it was, surely the House ought to attach great weight to what he had said in his evidence. The Committee also had before them two distinguished police magistrates—Mr. Rose and Mr. Dickinson. Their evidence was practically identical. They suggested the same remedies, and he would like to be allowed to read one extract from the evidence of Mr. Rose. He said he was not so shocked as might perhaps be expected, at the idea of apprehending persons who were selling pirated music. If those persons could only be reached by making it penal, and by apprehending them, he confessed he could not see why they should not be so treated. That was sufficient to show how necessary it was that the House should grant an effectual remedy for this evil.

When talking of pirates, he wondered how many Members there were in the House who knew how piracy was carried on. Now, piracy was the taking of another man's property and selling it as though it were his own—a process not indistinguishable from stealing. The pirate selected what songs he would sell. He selected only those songs which had proved to be a success; he photographed them, put that production on a plate and then printed any number of copies. Not only that, but sometimes a song was copied out in rough hand. Now, unless power was given to destroy these plates the root of the evil could not be struck at. Having produced these copies, how were they sold? The manufacturers of these copies were much too wary to go themselves out into the street to sell them. They had agents. They employed a middleman who had no shop or abode, but had what was known as a "lock-up"—a place on an upper story of a building in the city or elsewhere. He himself had been anxious to discover how this process was carried on, and had visited one of these "shops." He found there shelves carefully partitioned off, in which the various pirated copies were kept. But the middleman was wary; he did not purchase any very large number of copies from the printer, so that he only kept a few there. Moreover, he did not sell them to the public. He employed somebody else; and went to where hawkers were to be found. Now, hawkers were to be found principally in public houses. He made that statement because it might be agreeable to the advocates of temperance reform. The hawker was found in the public house by the middleman, who sold him the limit of twenty-five copies. There was no risk of detection as to who was the printer in purchasing from the hawker, because the hawker did not know who the printer was. Moreover, the hawker adopted various forms of selling. He sold in the street; he canvassed from house to house, from door to door; and solicited orders by post. He sold either from the kerbstone, or from a barrow, or from market stalls. He might even go outside a music-seller's shop who was selling legitimate copies of the music and sell there pirated copies of the music. He could also sell outside a music hall, not according to the merit of the song, but to its popularity. He commended that fact to the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, if that hon. Gentleman was going to turn a music publisher! Moreover, the pirate sold the music by the yard, so to speak. Four sheets were sold for a penny, no matter what its merits might be; eight sheets for 2d.; and twelve sheets for 4d. But care was taken to print the music as closely as possible. When the hawkers' sales, either in the street, or through the post, or by canvas from door to door, fell off, the middleman issued leaflets or advertised in the newspapers, and assumed various names. Here was a specimen of an advertisement which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* on 5th September last year—

> "Special Notice.—For the last many years we have been supplying the public at a price unheard of for cheapness, carrying out our orders promptly, scrupulously and conscientiously, with the highest-class music, of which we have always a large variety in stock. The public have not been slow in appreciating our services, in token of which we daily receive letters thanking us for our never-failing attendance. We return thanks to our customers, and warn the public against falsehoods spread by self-interested mischief-mongers misrepresenting us as obtaining money under false pretences. If any lady or gentleman will send us at our undermentioned letter address a claim of an order unfulfilled (if in accordance witn our books) we promise to supply order, or send back money within three days. Note letter address, A. Brown, 66, Highbury New Park, N."

It was not a little pathetic that underneath that advertisement there appeared another in regard to the Local Examinations for the Royal College of Music from a student who seemed to be studiously anxious to pass that examination, and in which he asked where he might obtain cheap music. But the middleman also dealt through the post. He issued circulars, and here was one of them from Birmingham—

> "Dear Sir,—If you are desirous of purchasing any further copies of high-class music at the present low prices please send your order at once, as after the proposed amendment of the Act of Parliament relating to Musical Copyright is passed it will be impossible for us to supply you with the same copies after a short time."

MR. CALDWELL: Hear, hear.

MR. GALLOWAY said that the pirate was quite aware that the ability of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark to prevent an effectual remedy being provided was coming to an end, and that he would have to cease soon carrying on his nefarious trade. What was the "high-class" music that was being sold? "The Honeysuckle and the Bee," "The horse the missus dries the clothes on," "You can get a sweetheart any day, but not another mother," "Looping the loop with Lucy," and so forth. If that was the high-class music the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark wished to see taught in the board schools, and if it was for the production of such music at cheap rates that the hon. Member thought pirates should be leniently dealt with, he could only say that, as one who had been interested in music all his life, he would be sorry for the musical development of the country. What class of person were the hawkers who issued this cheap music? If they were carrying on an honest or a reputable business they would have no need to take any name or address other than their own. but in the cases of hawkers who had been traced they were found to be trading under various names and at different addresses. Another practice was to print a large number of circulars and send them round to their own friends in the trade, who simply placed their names on them by means of a rubber stamp. So the game went merrily on, and the existing powers were not sufficient to stop it.

The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark had argued in his Report that the copyright owners had used their privilege in such a manner as to be detrimental to the interests of the public, and to the advancement of the cause of music, and so as to induce piracy. He would take those arguments in order. As to the interest of the public, what was the method adopted? The composer got his lyrics from the author, who was paid either by royalty or by fee; and then he went to the publisher, who either bought the copyright outright or agreed to pay certain royalties. The song had then to be sung and advertised, and publishers sometimes actually ran concerts to advertise their songs. This method, which was the growth of years, was fair to the public, because the copyright lasted only forty-two years, and it was fair as between composer and publisher because it was the system adopted all over the country. There was no compulsion whatever upon the composer and author to adopt this method unless they thought fit. As a matter of fact, at one time the composers and authors endeavoured to do without the publisher by forming a combination amongst themselves, but the attempt utterly failed, the reason of the failure being that capital was necessary, and for the most part neither composers nor authors were possessed of much wealth. If the present system was detrimental to the interests of the public, it necessarily followed that some other system ought to be adopted, but he maintained that there was no other system possible except that of the composers and authors themselves publishing. That meant that a person would be able to acquire the copyright only if he composed, published, advertised, and sung his own songs. He might be able to satisfy the first three, but the fourth of those requirements would be a serious impediment to composers. The next argument of the hon. Gentleman was that the present system was detrimental to the advancement of the cause of music. It was difficult to understand the sudden desire evinced by the hon. Member to advance the cause of music. Doubtless he had some ulterior motive—he did not say it was a bad one, but it was not apparent on the face of the circumstances. It was the more difficult to understand inasmuch as the hon. Member was the person who succeeded in preventing the House of Commons from discussing the question last year. The third argument of the hon. Member was that "the excessive price charged to the public for music, as compared with the cost of production (even after allowing the fullest remuneration to the composer) offered a great temptation to piracy." If there was anything in that argument, it followed logically that if the price was reduced piracy would cease. But what had happened? An eminent firm of publishers, Messrs. Day & Co., had published a sixpenny edition of a cheaper class of music, and those very songs were amongst the first taken by the pirates. In the face of that fact how could it be argued that the dearness of music had anything to do with the piracy?

The complaint was that the price of music was excessive. How was a song produced? The publisher had to agree with the author, and his royalty was frequently about 1d. per copy, and sometimes he was paid a fee of perhaps twenty or thirty guineas. He was speaking from the point of view of the publisher. He often had to pay to the composer not only a retaining fee, but sometimes a royalty of 6d. per copy. One of the most eminent of English musicians, whose memory was still fresh to the English musical public, got as much as 6d. per copy in royalties during the latter years of his life. The publisher having got the song and published it, it had to be advertised, which often was very expensive; and not only this, but it had to be sung, and some of the eminent singers, like Miss Clara Butt and Mr. Andrew Black, had been known to get as much as 3d. per copy. He had heard of one eminent singer who got as much as £600 for singing a copyright song. The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark, who had discussed this subject without having mastered the facts, believed that English copyright music was largely printed abroad. Here was one of those cases where a little knowledge was a dangerous thing. The hon. Member had got that information from the evidence given by Mr. Enoch in reply to a question put by himself. Mr. Enoch stated that four-fifths of English copyright music was printed abroad, and upon that the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark made his statement that four-fifths of English music was printed abroad. That was a mis-statement of the facts, although he did not wish to throw any reflection on Mr. Enoch's evidence or the Report of the hon. Member opposite. Take, for example, Messrs. Chappell & Co., Boosey & Co., and Messrs. Novello, who were the principal publishers of music in London. Messrs. Novello had got their own printing works and engraving staff, and not a note of any kind produced by them was sent out. Messrs. Chappell & Co. employed their own printers and engravers, and so did Messrs. Boosey & Co. The hon. Member had referred to Glasgow. Was he aware that even from his own native town of Manchester they sent music to be engraved and published in Glasgow, and what was more, it was done more cheaply there than abroad. The statement that four-fifths of English copyright music was printed abroad was therefore very misleading, and it was absurd for the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark, on this statement, to take that to be an absolute fact without inquiring into its accuracy.

MR. CALDWELL said he took it from the evidence of the hon. Member for Manchester's own witness, and he had no other evidence or knowledge; and in his Report he referred to the answer that four-fifths of the English copyright music was printed abroad.

MR. GALLOWAY said he did not think the hon. Member knew anything else, and when he knew that fact he did not know much about the question. The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark issued a Minority Report containing some statements which ought to be dealt with. The statement that the printing of copyright music was done mostly abroad was misleading and inaccurate. Then again, the publisher had to pay office expenses, and rent and other expenses, and for the first few months every song was sold at not more than 8d. per copy to the trade. He wished to add, and he believed he was right in stating, that the number of successes proportionate to failures in the publication of new songs, was about one in fifty, and in some cases only one in a hundred. Surely if that was true it ought to be taken into consideration. The purchaser did not need to pay those prices and there was no compulsion upon anyone to buy the music. Frequently the public paid 6s. for a new book, and therefore it could not be said that 1s. 4d. was a very high price for a piece of music. The 6s. novel was, as a rule, only read once, but a piece of music was played time after time and often played by many persons. The hon. Member had argued that music was more expensive in England than in other countries. He did not think that was accurate, for his experience was that music was far more expensive abroad than in England. Take, for example, a copy of a musical play like "The Geisha." That was sold at 6s., or with the discount taken off, 4s. 8d. If they went to France they would have to pay twelve francs for a copy of "The

Geisha." He could give the House many instances of that kind, and it was erroneous to say that the cost of music was more in this country than it was abroad.

The hon. Member opposite had said that he could only agree to certain remedies on condition that the precedent of the Patents Act was carried out. That Act under certain circumstances provided that they might insist upon the owner selling at a certain price. Nobody had any settled idea as to the actual working of the Patents Act in this respect. They were entirely in the dark as to the view of the Privy Council upon it, and it was not unreasonable to say that before they extended that principle they should at least know the result of the working of the Act. He did not attach any importance one way or the other to it, but he did not think that composers and music publishers should have such an extreme remedy used against them. The hon. Member opposite in his Report objected to two points, but he would deal first with the question of exports. As regarded exports the Committee had received some extraordinary evidence from Mr. Stephen Adams, who said he had been in Canada and his works had been sold there. In his opinion what they required was to get at the printer, and not so much at the person who aided and abetted the printer, and that was a point which it was most desirable should be dealt with. It had been suggested in the Minority Report that the piracy of books in America was stopped by bringing down the price of books, and it had been argued that if they did the same thing in regard to music they would stop piracy here. He doubted this, but his point was that in America the stopping of piracy had not been brought about by the reduction in the price of books. In 1892 there was no law dealing with piracy in America and books were pirated there wholesale, with the result that the Copyright Act was passed.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to call attention to the fact that there are not forty Members present.

Forty Members being present the House resumed.

Mr. Galloway.

Mr. GALLOWAY said he had taken an interest in music all his life. He had had many friends who had been deprived of their livelihood and brought to the direst straits of poverty through the piracy complained of. The House was probably aware that the Berne Convention had been construed as giving the same protection to owners of foreign copyright in England as was given to English copyright in foreign countries. He thought it was essentially desirable that that should be done. If this country received favour from foreign countries in this matter it was equitable that we should give the same advantages to others. He wished to say a few words with regard to the price of music. Anybody who had read the Report by the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark would see that he made a great point on that matter. The whole of the hon. Member's Report was based on the assumption that music was too dear, and that in consequence the poorer classes were shut out from purchasing it.

Mr. JOSEPH DELVIN rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

***Mr. SPEAKER**: I cannot accept that Motion, but I hope that the hon. Member will confine himself strictly to the question raised in the Bill before the House.

Mr. GALLOWAY said he was going to deal with the question of the price of non-copyright music, but he would pass from that and deal with another question which he thought was as essential as that of price. It was said that the remedies proposed by the Bill should not be given because Parliament had already passed enactments restricting the price, and had thereby done all that was necessary to protect the composers of music and at the same time to protect the public. He did not in the least hold that view. He thought it was founded on an incorrect interpretation of the Statute. He did say that Parliament, having given the right which was established by the Act of 1882, ought to provide powers by which the Statute could be carried out. He submitted that the remedies proposed by the Bill were the only remedies which would effectually carry out that object. He asked the House to accept the principle of the Bill by agreeing to the Second Reading, reserving minor points for consideration in Committee.

MR. CALDWELL said the speech to which they had just listened was a complete justification of the action taken last year in refusing to allow the Bill to pass without discussion. He thought it was very useful indeed that they should have an opportunity of discussing the Bill. He did not know how far the hon. Member had helped the progress of his Bill, because if it had taken two hours to deliver one speech on the Second Reading he did not know how, in the limited time after Whitsuntide, it would be possible to get through a contentious measure containing a great many clauses. That was, however, probably a matter for the future. He was not going to follow the hon. Member into his personalities. The hon. Member had referred to his opposition to Bills. He would point out in answer to the hon. Member that of about 170 private Member's Bills introduced in the past two sessions only a very small number (15) became law, and that, of those which were passed, the majority were Bills which were introduced on the Government side of the House, and not one of which had an early place on the ballot. The suggestion that Bills were blocked on the Opposition side of the House was not justified. When the hon. Member talked of the blocking of Bills he would remind him of one Bill which passed the Second Reading by a large majority, and passed through the Standing Committee and through Report in the House down to the last Amendment, by large majorities. That was the Innkeepers Liability Bill, which was promoted with the view of providing refreshments for cyclists. The hon. Member for South-West Manchester talked it out. Not only did he do that once, but on another occasion, when there was half an hour to spare, he talked it out again. He was not the man who should come forward and reprove sin of that sort. Reference had been made to the constitution of the Committee.

He received a letter from the Home Office, when in Scotland, asking him if he would attend a Departmental Committee. It was said that another Member of Parliament was to be on the Committee. The subject was one which he thought ought to be inquired into by a Committee, and he consented to serve, stating that he thought the Government ought to introduce the necessary legislation. He came from Scotland to London and spent the whole of January sitting on the Committee in the interest of a Bill dealing with the matter, and then the hon. Member suggested that he was put on the Committee because he was the representative of the pirates. That was a dishonourable imputation to bring against a Member of the House. What was the composition of the Committee? The hon. Member for South-West Manchester represented the copyright owners. He did not conceal his friendship for them. Another member was Mr. John Murray, Publisher, the man who held the greatest interest in copyrights in the kingdom. Another was Mr. Scrutton, K.C. It had been said that he represented the Board of Trade. He was counsel and adviser for the Musical Copyright Association in proceedings under the Musical Copyright Act, 1902. How could he judge impartially in the matter? In this House it was understood that when counsel was engaged in a case he should not take part in the vote upon it. Mr. Scrutton was the member of the Committee who wrote out the Report of the Majority of the Committee. It was not a Report written by the chairman. The House had only to look at the questions put by him from the beginning to see exactly where his bias lay. Mr. Fenwick was, he admitted, impartial, able, and courteous, but everybody knew that matters of piracy had been before the magistrates, and that they had formed a definite opinion on the subject. Not only so, but the Musical Copyright Association in one of their statements said that they had received "loyal assistance" from the magistrates as well as the police. It was a grand thing to have on the Committee one who had given loyal support to the copyright owners when the matter was being considered and reported on. The only Member of the Committee left was himself, and it could be seen at once that there was a great disparity—four against one. The witnesses were all brought forward by the Copyright

Association. Not one was brought forward by him (Mr. Caldwell) and as to the king of the pirates, he absolutely knew nothing about him or about a single pirate until the Committee received a letter from Willetts asking to be heard. He had no sympathy with the pirates, and he had had no communication, direct or indirect, with anyone. He had no grievance to represent on the Committee. He was there to look at the matter purely from the public point of view.

Coming to the merits of the Bill he thought he could state the matter shortly in this way. The difference between the two Reports lay in the difference of view which had been taken as to copyright. The majority had acted on the view, which was openly stated, that they considered copyright was a right of property the same as a man had in his watch. They also asserted that he had a right to charge the public anything he pleased for his copyright [An HON. MEMBER: No.] and that the public had no right or interest whatever with regard to price or the manner in which the right of copyright was exercised. Every witness maintained that it was a right of property, and therefore the Report of the Committee was a logical consequence. If copyright was the same right as a man had in his watch obviously they got in the criminal law at once. But they were not content with getting in the criminal law, because it was proposed to change the onus of proof. They said that a man must prove his innocence They said that an accused person could give evidence as a prisoner to prove his innocence. If it was to apply in this case it should apply to every other. The contention of the Minority Report was that copyright was a privilege conferred by Parliament. The words conferring that privilege were—

> "the sole and exclusive liberty of multiplying copies."

That liberty was conferred by Parliament for a limited number of years, and under certain conditions, and the public had a right to demand that the privilege should be exercised fairly and reasonably in the interests of the public. That privilege was not absolute property in the same sense as a watch was a man's absolute property. In the case of musical compositions, copyright carried with it not only the sole and exclusive right of multiplying copies but also the sole right of representation and performance, the penalty for infringement in the latter case being not less than 40s. or the proceeds of the entertainment whichever was greatest. Under this law, copyright holders mulcted people in villages in penalties of not less than £2 for singing a song in public without receiving the authority of the holder of the copyright; but in 1888 Parliament interfered, and imposed more modest penalties, and gave absolute discretion to the Judges as to costs. The result was that now no one had the slightest compunction in singing a song in public, even supposing they had not asked the consent of the composer. If Parliament granted a privilege to anyone, Parliament could take that privilege away. For instance, under the Patents Act, 1902, where it is proved to the satisfaction of the Privy Council that the reasonable requirements of the public are not being satisfied, the Privy Council have the power to compel Licences or may revoke the patent. Why was it that there had been so much piracy in regard to music, and so little in the case of books? The explanation of that was very simple. Cheap 6d. editions of novels originally published at 6s. were offered to the public. The cost of production had something to do with piracy. The engraving only cost a few shillings, and a thousand copies could be printed for £1—10s. for the printing off and 10s. for the paper. That only came to one halfpenny a copy, and it would be even less if more than 1,000 copies were printed.

Reference had been made to advertising, but everybody knew that advertising did not add to the cost of production. A man advertised because it paid him to advertise; and it was ridiculous to talk about advertising adding a single penny to the cost of production. The net price to the trade was 7d. per copy, and the lowest price charged at the stores to the public was 1s. 4d., so that the dealers got 9d. for handing a piece of music over the counter. In Birmingham and Scotland the retailer charged the public 1s. 8d., and there were retailers who charged 2s. The music was published at 4s. and professors and teachers of music could charge up to that amount. The burden of the song of the hon. Member for Manchester was that the brains of the poor composer were being stolen. If they were, it was the publishers who were stealing them. The customary royalty in the case of the very few tip-top composers was only 2½d. net. A great number, however, only got a few shillings for a song, and some only a few copies, which cost a farthing each, as their reward for the copyright. In the case of "Ora Pro Nobis" by Piccolimini thousands of pounds had been drawn by the publishers, and how much did the composer get?—A miserable sum of £10! The public paid the same price for the most trashy piece of music as they did for the best, because the publishers had a ring or combination among themselves to keep up the price, whilst the Musical Copyright Association, according to their own statement, had an army of agents, and spent thousands of pounds in enforcing the copyright law. This putting forward the poor composer was like putting women and children in front of a line of soldiers.

The next question was, "Was there a market for cheaper music?" They all knew that things had changed very considerably since 1842. Singing was now a part of the code in every public elementary school, and there were now pianos and other musical instruments in working men's homes in abundance. Parents did not complain of the fees paid for teaching singing and music, but they complained of the enormous price charged for the sheets of music—2s. for what only cost a halfpenny to produce, plus the royalty to the composer. The complaint was that there was piracy. Why was there piracy? It was because the hawkers could not get cheap music. They and the stall-holders in the market places were selling large quantities of classical music at popular prices, and naturally desired to supply their customers with popular music of the day at reasonable prices, and claimed that they had as much right to sell music and have their profits as any man in Bond Street. The hon. Member for Manchester said that 500,000 copies of music had been seized; but did not that show in what direction the public sympathy and demand lay? The existence of a large market for cheap music was admitted by Mr. Day the president of the Musical Copyright Association. He stated that the pirates did not claim that the price of all music should be reduced, but that there should be two editions, one at a high price and another at a low price, like the cheap sixpenny novels. Mr. Day, whose firm established a sixpenny series last October, in all respects the same as the 4s. series, said he felt sure that there was a demand on the part of the public for it. The sixpenny series was sold to the trade at 2d. per copy and that included the copyright, the cost of engraving, of printing, and every other expense. That series was commenced in October, and was it not a blessing that the Bill was not passed last session. Hawkers bought that series at 2d., and could sell it at anything between 2d. and 6d. That showed what could be done if the wide market instead of the narrow market were taken. What did the Bill ask for? It asked for the power of imprisonment, in order that the price of music should be kept up to a minimum price to the public of 1s. 4d. per copy and anything from that up to 4s. It would shut out the hawkers from earning a living in the market places in the interest of a few West End music sellers. As regarded the composers, if a wide market were opened up, they would be appreciated by the working classes, and their talents would find an opening which was now closed against them by the music publishers. A smaller royalty would bring in larger returns owing to the enormously larger sale through the reduction in price. Concurrently with any remedy for putting down piracy, care should be taken to safeguard the rights of the general public. There ought to be a clause in the Bill that, if the reasonable rights of the public were not satisfied, the Privy Council should have the power to compel licences or cancel the copyright. He was sure that no hon. Member who was concerned for the public interest rather than for the selfish interest of the publishers would object to give power of that kind to such a responsible body as the Privy Council. It appeared to be imagined that imprisonment would be a remedy, but imprisonment would be useless unless there was public sympathy behind it. As long as there was a public grievance owing to the excessive price charged for the music, no matter what legislation was passed it would be a failure. The solution was the 6d. edition, which would enable hawkers and others to sell to their customers at a profit, and only legitimate music would then be sold. As regarded imprisonment, it was complained last year that prison accommodation was becoming insufficient. Imprisonment was now being passed for the smallest thing—almost for blowing one's nose—and the result was that the prisons were becoming overcrowded, numbers going to prison rather than pay the fines. How many men were there in the market places of London who would run the risk of being sent to prison, where they would be better fed and better housed, for what would not be considered a dishonourable offence? For himself he would not object to the Second Reading of the Bill. The question was not the rejection of the Bill but the protection of the public, and he hoped the House would remember when the Bill came back in the Report stage to take their time at any rate in discussing the details.

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said he ventured to intervene in the debate because he had been for a very long time interested in the subject before the House. Hon. Members who had been any considerable time in the House had seen the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark play many parts, and he hoped the hon. Member would forgive him for a good-humoured analogy when he said that the hon. Member surprised the House by sailing in in the character of Captain Kidd, under the Jolly Roger, to look after the interests of the pirates. There was no doubt that those who were interested in the Bill were at present suffering from certain quite admitted evils. The operations of the pirates struck not only at the roots of the prosperity of the musical community and the rights of property, which some people did not appear to regard very much, but he was not putting it too high when he said that they struck also at that respect which people ought to feel for the law and public morality generally. Parliament had granted absolute privileges to the musical profession in the Copyright Act, and he thought that the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark was quite wide of the mark when he said that those privileges were granted solely in the interests of the public. They were granted to protect the brain-property of British citizens, who had as much right to that property as people had to material property. It was a humiliating position for Parliament to find that the Act which was passed in 1842, and which it was thought granted privileges to the musical community, was nothing but an empty form which was defied by the enemies of musical copyright. Was it any wonder, when a procession of four-in-hands was driven through an Act of Parliament over the defenceless bodies of music publishers and composers, that they should come to Parliament and ask Parliament to make good its word and intention as expressed in the Act of 1842? The evidence before the Committee showed falling receipts on the part of music publishers and diminishing royalties on the part of musical composers and singers, as a result of what he might call the State-aided invasion of the pirates, most of whom were foreigners. After an intimate acquaintance of fifteen years with music publishers and composers he knew that not only the publishers who had given evidence suffered but that the small men suffered too. Were they not to be allowed to stand up for the small men? The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark ought to have justified his self-confident assertion that the music publishers were making large profits. As a matter of fact they did not. If on a fine song they made a profit, there was to be set against it the losses on other songs. The remedy provided in the Bill was swift, sure, and cheap, and he hoped the Government would help to pass the measure into law.

He objected to the new morality which was being preached by the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark. The hon. Member said, in effect, that what the public wanted it was to have at its own price and honestly, if it could get it, otherwise dishonestly; legally if it could get it, otherwise illegally. To satisfy this alleged craving on the part of the public they were asked to continue to allow a coach-and-four to be driven through an Act of Parliament. It was said that the pirate helped musical education and that it would be retarded if this Bill were passed; but he thought it very questionable whether the songs which were pirated had any educational value at all. No one admired more than he did songs from "The Geisha" or "The Country Girl," but he doubted if they had any educational value, and he was quite certain that their composers did not learn their art from either musical comedies or sentimental songs. As for the pirates he thought that the last thing that entered their dishonest brain was that they were giving the people music of educational value. But although the works pirated might have no educational value, they were the property of the man who produced them, and he ought to be protected from the man who waited for the moment when, after expensive advertisement, they had become popular, and then stepped in to deprive him of his profits. This man waited till he heard the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark whistling the song on the top of a bus, then bought a copy, photographed it, sold it at a ridiculously low price, and earned a dishonest income out of it. The hon. Member advised music publishers to take a leaf out of the book of the pirate and sell music at 6d. instead of 1s. 4d. Mr. Day himself admitted that his firm did not aim at publishing high-class music, but even the music-hall songs published by Mr. Day's firm were pirated and there would be no chance for his firm in the long run. He regretted that the genius and geniality of the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark should have been wasted in opposition to the Bill. He had once looked on the hon. Member as the model of all the Conservative virtues; then he became the apostle of advanced Radical views, and now he was the arch-priest of the old-time calling of piracy and of unearned increment. The hon. Member would take a great responsibility on himself if this Bill was rejected. He would be doing a great deal to ruin a trade which had branches not only throughout this country but also in the Colonies, and he would be doing a great deal to diminish the incomes of musical composers who were giving their best work for the benefit of the country. The hon. Member would also be doing much to show the impotence of Parliament to enforce its own laws of copyright, by methods which were well known and very effective in foreign countries.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE HOME OFFICE (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.) said he desired to briefly express his views on the Bill which was introduced in such an eloquent and able speech by the hon. Member for the Newbury Division. He would not attempt to emulate the eloquence of the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark, but would put a simple statement before the House. The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark complained of the nature of the speech of his hon. friend the Member for South-West Manchester, but the hon. Member himself in explaining last session his attitude in blocking the Bill, said that it was of such a contentious character that it ought not to be passed without full discussion, which it could not receive at the then period of the session. He did not think that his hon. friend did more than his duty in bringing before the House all the arguments. He wished to associate himself with all that had been said in praise of the manner in which the Departmental Committee had carried out the task entrusted to it by the Home Office. Mr. Fenwick was one of the most experienced of men, and he thought that for the pains which were taken by it, the Committee deserved the thanks of the House of Commons. The two hon. Members who had addressed the House showed how thorough the investigations had been, and he thought their painstaking labour ought to be appreciated. The conclusion at which the Committee arrived was that a widespread system of piracy had grown up and was doing serious injury to the property of composers and publishers of music; that this piracy owed its origin to the inadequacy of the remedies provided by Parliament to protect that property against persons, of no means and no settled abode, who deliberately conspired to break the law. The Acts which had been found by the Committee to be inadequate were the

Acts of 1842, 1869, and 1902. As regarded the Act of 1842, which the hon. Member for Mid. Lanark said was passed to encourage music and not to protect property, the preamble said—

> "Whereas it is expedient to amend the law relating to copyright and to afford greater encouragement to the production of literary works of lasting benefit to the world."

then "copyright" was construed to mean—

> "The sole and exclusive liberty of printing or otherwise multiplying copies of any subject to which the said word is herein applied."

The remedy against piracy in that Act was that the pirate should be liable to a civil action on the suit of the proprietor of such copyright to be brought in any Court of Record in that part of the British dominions in which the offence was committed. Then a further section said that pirated copies should be deemed to be the property of the proprietor of such copyright. The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark seemed to deny that copyright was in any sense personal property. He said that copyright was not property as was a watch. That was perfectly true; but was not copyright like the lease the hon. Member probably had of his own house. If the hon. Member disputed that he would refer him to Copinger, a well known authority on copyright who asked what property could be more a man's own than his literary works. There was clearly property in copyright, not perhaps the same as with the hon. Member's watch, but as was possessed by a leaseholder, and Parliament ought to give similar remedies for infringement of copyright as were given if a lease were in any way infringed. The Act of 1842 said that the pirate could be proceeded against by civil action, but it was absolutely impossible to proceed against a man who gave no name or address, or who gave a false address. A typical case had been mentioned in which a man transferred his business to his wife, and thus, though continuing to sell pirated music, evaded the injunction. It was obvious that civil proceedings against an anonymous person without means were useless. The Newspaper Act of 1869 had been held by the Attorney-General not to apply to publications such as music, and the *fiat* of the Attorney-General was necessary to give effect to proceedings under that Act. The Act of 1902 was deficient because it gave no power to enter premises by force to search for pirated copies. The case had been mentioned of a seller of pirated copies whose open shop was in the basement and whose stock of pirated music was in a locked-up shop upstairs which could not be entered by the police. In another case the door was barred and pirated music sold through a wicket. It was known that there was any number of pirated copies of music in the house, but the police were in the circumstance unable to make an entry and seize them. The police did eventually get in when the people inside got thirsty and sent out for beer, and several thousands of pirated copies were seized. That showed that the law required strengthening. Again, copies when seized remained at the police offices for a long period. The whole stock was not accessible when seizures were affected, and, before what was seized could be destroyed, the proprietor had to be summoned to appear; but it was impossible to discover the owner, so that the police were rapidly accumulating enormous masses of these productions, which they had no legal power to destroy. He thought that that required the remedy provided by the Bill.

Let the House glance at the extent of the evil which they had to face. Its magnitude had only become apparent since 1901. In that year, only forty-seven copyrights were infringed, now no fewer than 231 pirated copyright editions were known, and 467,575 copies had fallen into the hands of the Metropolitan Police in eleven months. In one week 45,000 copies were seized, and the "king of the pirates" had described these as only a small toll of the numbers that might be found. The composer and publisher, having invested their brains and money, had a right to look for some protection. Mr. Maybrick had told the Committee that, on asking the street-seller of a pirated work of his who the publisher was, the man said, "Good morning," and ran away too quickly to be overtaken. Some better remedy should be open to the composer other than that dependent on his ability to pursue the pirate through the streets of London.

That the law was ineffective was well-known to those who had knowledge on the subject. Sir Harry Poland, Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Rose had all testified to that effect. They had described the method adopted by these pirates, and pointed out how a man hawking these piracies in the street only had a few copies in his possession at a time, which were practically of no value, and when he had sold them drew more out from his store in a depôt close by. Then there was the practice of canvassing from house to house, and of soliciting orders through the post, the letters being addressed from some small shop where only a few copies were kept. It was hard that the composer and publisher should put their brains into their work and secure publicity for it at great expense, risking many failures for a percentage of successes, and that then the pirate should step in and by ingenious means undersell them. Civil actions were unsatisfactory in their results, for out of twelve Messrs. Boosey had only succeeded in recovering any costs in two instances, and they had spent no less than £500 in doing so. That was a very heavy outlay for so small a result, and what did the public gain by buying these cheap productions of copyright music? If it were a gain at all, it was one obtained at great cost, for ultimately it must result in starving out the best composers and discouraging all legitimate enterprise in this direction. The hon. Member for Mid. Lanark had stated that the right of copyright was not an absolute one.

MR. CALDWELL: I pointed out that in 1888 Parliament had so whittled down the sole right of representation and performance owing to abuses by the owners of copyright that it was practically inoperative.

*__MR. COCHRANE__ said the hon. Member had complained also of the prices charged for copyrighted music. Did he want it fixed by some authority; did he desire a return to the Sumptuary Laws? Really he was a great Conservative at heart! Probably he would like to go back to the enactment of Queen Anne, under which the copyright prices were ordered to be fixed at a reasonable figure by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chancellor and Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, the Bishop of London, the Chief Justices of the Queen's Bench and Common Pleas or other designated officials. The Bill in its main principles was one the House would do well to adopt. Some of the details would require careful consideration in Committee, especially those having relation to penalties. He believed it was in the public interest that the law should be clearly defined and its provisions made more stringent for the prevention of piracy leading to all kinds of fraud and impropriety. He hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading and refer it to the Standing Committee on Trade.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc."—(*Mr. Mount.*)

MR. CALDWELL objected, and urged that the purely legal character of the Bill required consideration by the Committee on Law.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) agreed with this view, and moved the substitution of the Law Committee for the Trade Committee.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'Trade, etc.,' and insert the words, 'Law, etc.' "—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GALLOWAY submitted that the Bill dealt with a purely trade matter, and therefore they thought the Grand Committee on Trade the proper body to deal with it. So far as the promoters were concerned, however, it did not matter which Committee it was sent to.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.), as a member of the Standing Committee on Trade, confessed that he felt totally disqualified to deal with the intricate points of law raised by the Bill. Could not the difficulty be met by nominating the President of the Board of Trade to represent that Department on the Grand Committee on Law while the Bill was under consideration?

Mr. COCHRANE said he suggested that the Bill should go to the Standing Committee on Trade because the question was one largely dealt with by that Department.

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) pointed out that the Standing Committee on Law dealt with shipping questions which were essentially matters of trade.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) hoped that the Bill would be sent to the Grand Committee on Law.

Question put and negatived.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire) said he rose with considerable diffidence to move the Second Reading of this Bill, not because of the nature of its proposal but because he felt his personal inability to do justice to all the arguments in its favour. It had no doubt intense interest for all the miners of Great Britain, and that interest was shared by Members. With the exception of those in Durham and Northumberland, the proposal to restrict underground labour to eight hours a day had the support of the miners of the United Kingdom. The Bill was not overburdened with clauses: its effective clause simply proposed that the hours passed by miners underground in their labour should be restricted to eight, and that the proposal should extend to all underground working in the United Kingdom. Many thousands of boys were employed underground, and he would ask hon. Members if that fact alone did not constitute one of the strongest arguments in favour of the Bill. What were the claims of miners to this concession from the Legislature? The first was the large number employed in the mining industry. Then the peculiar nature of their work should plead on their behalf, seeing that so many hours had to be spent in daily labour far from the light of day, and amidst great risks and dangers. The death roll in 1902 totalled 1,172, and how often did they hear of terrible cases, such as the aged father and mother being suddenly deprived of all means of support by the death at one time of their three sons while working in one mine. Surely it was not unreasonable to demand that the daily hours of the underground labour should be restricted to eight.

Having had but little mining experience he was not very well versed in these matters; he preferred to quote the opinions of three eminent statesmen in support of these proposals. The late Lord Salisbury in 1890 said he believed that, as a rule, eight hours a day was quite as much labour as the muscle or tension of the brain of an average man could give. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at West Calder in the same year, said that though he was not a miner he had been down a coal pit and had the feeling, which it seemed to him every man who had been in a mine must entertain, that eight hours out of every twenty-four was quite enough for any human being to labour under such conditions. And, finally, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose asserted — also in the same year — that public opinion was unmistakably in favour of the proposal to limit the hours of working underground to eight at a time. Miners were paid according to the amount of work they did, and experience had taught them that shorter hours meant concentrated energy, while longer hours involved dilatory application. In his opinion long hours meant useless, inefficient, and bad work. It had been urged that because the Northumberland and Durham miners were opposed to the proposal the House ought to reject it, but he had yet to learn that any law had ever been the product of unanimous assent. It was because unanimity was impossible in a community that law became necessary. He did not wish to pass lightly over the opposition of a valuable contingent of mining labour to the Bill. He was prepared to give every consideration to the views of that group. The respect and esteem in which its representatives were held in this House by every Member of it, and by himself in a special degree, were such that had he them on his side the burden of his task would be light indeed. He felt sure had he this assistance it would have such an effect upon the judgment of this House as would ensure the passing of the Second Reading with accord. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.) on rising to move the rejection of the Bill on behalf of the representatives in the House of the miners of the North of England, thanked the hon. Member for the kind and sympathetic expressions which he had used towards them. But he wished the House to bear in mind that he and his colleagues did not approach this question merely from the point of view of miners. They desired to face it in its general aspect and to discuss on broad grounds its merits and demerits. The hon. Member had pleaded ignorance on the question, and he was bound to say if hon. Members generally were more versed in the technicalities of the question, and knew the difference that existed between the mines in the Midlands and the North, they would not be so ready to support the measure. He acknowledged the pathetic truth of the hon. Member's description of the effects of a mining accident, but he would have liked him to explain how this Bill would lessen the number of these accidents. It had been stated that the great majority of the accidents in mines occurred during the latter part of the day. That was not so, for the return secured by the hon. Member for Wansbeck showed that a large proportion of the accidents in mines occurred in the early part of the day. It had further been suggested that long hours in the mine tended to conduce to careless kind of work, but there again they must bear in mind that in many cases men worked by themselves and that their lives were in their own hands, and it was to be feared that if the hours were shortened the desire would be to crowd more work into the time so as to make more money, and this eagerness might in itself beget carelessness, and an unintentional disregard of the necessity for taking all proper safeguards. As he had said, the return obtained by the hon. Member for Wansbeck had disproved the assertion that accidents in mines occurred with greater frequency in the latter part of the day. It should be borne in mind that work in a mine was quite different from any other occupation. Its technicalities, conditions, and circumstances varied, whereas in the case, say, of engineering, the conditions that surrounded the men were uniform and constant. This fact had been the principal groundwork of the opposition of the North to this Bill. There was a great difference in technicalities between the North and the Midlands, and to apply this Bill in its rigid form would be an impossibility.

The mover of the Bill had said it was a simple measure. That was true. He remembered reading at school the old story of the bull-dog and the bull, in which the bull-dog said it was his breeding that made him attack the bull, whereupon the bull replied that in that case his breeding had destroyed him. The simplicity of this Bill was its danger. It declared that every man in a mine, regardless of the nature of his work or the necessities of the mine, should work eight hours a day, no more and no less. Suppose there were 300 or 400 men going down the mine. Between the going down of the first and the last of those men half an hour would elapse. What guarantee was there that the first man down would be the first man up? Different men had different distances to go when they reached the bottom of the shaft, and that fact alone showed that the Bill required some modification in that particular. The measure was promoted by the Midland Federation. It was with much sorrow he remembered that since last session the most prominent figure in that Federation had been taken from them. Though at times some of them regretted what they considered to be his obstinacy, they all acknowledged his sincerity, and they believed that he promoted this Bill firmly believing it would be for the benefit of the men he represented. But they who opposed the Bill contended that it would be unjust to the men themselves. Some worked in the fresh air at the shaft; others worked in the wagon-ways where the air was fresh and the work light; others were engaged in the arduous coal-getting in cramped positions, sometimes in seams eighteen inches or two feet high; therefore, if the measure was to conduce to the welfare of the men all round it should allow an arrangement to be made whereby the men engaged in the lighter forms of labour might work longer hours to meet the necessities of the mine, while the men employed in the more arduous departments worked less. It was this want of elasticity of which the North complained. The average number of hours of the coal-getters in Durham was not 6¾ per day from bank to bank. The men could not be down the mine for longer than seven hours a day. By an arrangement which had been in existence for fourteen years a difference was made between the lighter and the more arduous forms of work, and thus justice was done to the men themselves. Two ideas had prompted both the promotion of and the opposition to this Bill. One was expediency. If he admitted that his colleagues in the Midland Federation were anxious for the welfare of their men, he claimed that the leaders in Durham and Northumberland were equally solicitous with regard to the men in the North, and it was because of the expediency of the matter, the difficulty of the universal application of the principle, and the revolution that it would cause in the coal mines of Durham and Northumberland, that they strongly opposed the measure. He regretted exceedingly the difference of opinion that existed between the miners' leaders on this matter, but he and his friends spoke of what they knew and with the sanction of the great majority of the men they represented. If the Bill passed he believed it would be the worst day's work the House of Commons ever did so far as miners were concerned.

Reference had been made to the views of three statesmen, but he assumed that the idea they had in their minds was that of eight hours actually at work, not eight hours in the mine. He had shown that in the North they considered eight hours' work too much, as their average was 6¾, and the men were allowed twenty-five minutes to travel a mile, so that if a man's work was a mile from the shaft he was allowed fifty minutes for travelling in and out. Numbers of people in the country believed the Bill meant eight hours' work in the mine, but that was not its meaning at all. What it meant was eight hours from the time the man left the surface. When the proposal was first brought forward two main reasons were urged—the necessity of the men for more leisure and an opportunity to improve their minds. "Humanity" was the generic term for the motive that prompted the Bill. But what was the reason now? It was not humanity, but a desire to settle competition between districts. ["No."] In 1894 the Bill was read a second time, and on the Committee stage the senior Member for Merthyr Tydvil secured the insertion of the "local option resolution," viz.—

> "In any county in which this Act should be adopted by a majority of the working men employed underground therein in the manner hereinafter provided it should become law."

Immediately that resolution was carried the promoters refused to proceed further. Why? There was no humanity in it, for one of their own spokesman, Mr. S. Woods, said—

> "It would put the districts in a very unequal position with regard to competing one with another. What we want is not to create inequality, but to cure it by putting all on the same level. . . . We want to give them equal rights and equal facilities for competing in the markets of the world."

That showed that Durham and Northumberland had not stood in the way of the other districts getting an eight hours day. They were willing then, as they were willing now to vote, for an optional Bill. The Midland districts could then have their eight hours, and the men of the North if they came to the same way of thinking could do the same. They had recommended option; they had recommended negotiation. Parliament in its care for the welfare of the people had certain functions to perform, but there were certain matters that were better taken out of the purview of this House and placed in the hands of the people themselves. To settle these matters he suggested negotiation between men who knew the circumstances, whose minds were full of compromise and mutuality, and who were willing to arrange matters in a manner that would conduce to the welfare of the mining community as a whole. Many Members would vote for this Bill who ought first to put their own house in order—men whose employes in shops and elsewhere worked fourteen or sixteen hours a day under conditions not conducive to health. How could they consistently vote for such a Bill? His teaching was "Physician, heal thyself." If he wanted a thing done for other people he first of all did it for his own and then he was able without hypocrisy to vote for it in regard to other people.

Colonel PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton), who spoke amid cries of "Speak up" and "We cannot hear a word," was understood to say that the opponents of this Bill deplored the accidents in mines as much as anybody could, but it was well known that every care was taken to prevent them. The Bill was an impossibility. It provided for eight hours in the pit from bank to bank, but of that eight hours a large part would be occupied in going to and coming from the work. Persons unacquainted with the conditions of work in the mines when they read about an "eight hours day" naturally supposed it meant eight hours' work, but that was not the case. Out of the eight hours would have to be taken the dinner hour and the time occupied in going to and coming from the work, so that the actual labour would be reduced to about six hours. Therefore all the work of the mines would have to be carried on under conditions of rush and hurry, and matters which were now carried out at considerable leisure would have to be crammed into the six hours. All authorities connected with mining considered that the passing of the Bill would lead to an increase in the number of accidents. It would certainly reduce the amount of work done, as it would be perfectly impossible for the men to do their present work in six hours. In all probability the output would be reduced by 25 per cent. Moreover, it would be impossible to employ any except the younger men. All middle-aged men and men of experience would be eliminated from the mines. ["Why?"] Because they could not work at the pace required by such conditions. The reduction of the output would reduce the wages and increase the price of coal. Cheap coal was one of the vital necessities of the country; it was the basis of all our large manufactures, the foundation of the wages and occupation of the workmen, and the material of all others which was required in every hamlet in the land.

Mr. OSMOND WILLIAMS rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 14th April.

NEW BILL.

TOWN AND COUNTY COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND).

Bill to enable women to be elected and act as members of Town and County Councils in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Baird, Colonel Denny, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Ure.

TOWN AND COUNTY COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To enable Women to be elected and act as members of Town and County Councils in Scotland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 99.]

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 29th February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Liverpool and Wigan Churches Bill [H.L.]; Maidenhead Bridge Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill [H.L.]; St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.]; St. Mary Woolnoth Bill [H.L.]. Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR.

Abstract of the Annual General Account for the year ended 26th July, 1903. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1894, and to provide for the punishment of incest. Was presented by the Lord Alverstone; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 18.)

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].

The following Lords were named of the Select Committee:—L. Belhaven and Stenton; L. Colchester; L. Wolverton; L. Kelvin; L. Farrer.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 29th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 62 AND 66 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders Nos. 62 and 66 have been complied with, viz.:—Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Brymbo Water Bill; Great Central and Midland Joint Railways Bill; Great Central Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill; Sheppy Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 67 has not been complied with, viz.:—Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Bexhill Water and Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill; Midland Railway Bill; Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Arlesey Gas Bill. Order [4th February], that the Arlesey Gas Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, read, and discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Sheffield; Fenton; Egerton; Belfast; Southport (two); Garston; Uxbridge; Ardwick; Houghton; Handsworth; St. Asaph; Flint; Newmarket; Uckfield; Bradford; East Ham; Bath; Lampeter; Birmingham; Halesowen; Ormskirk; Barking; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Tenbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

Petition from Liverpool, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Thatcham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Petition of the Trustees of the British Museum (King's Recommendation signified), for grant in aid; referred to the Committee of Supply.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Paper [presented 26th February] to be printed. [No. 77.]

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158B]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS).

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade of their Proceedings under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and The General Pier and Harbour Act (1861) Amendment Act, Session 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 78.]

WAR OFFICE (RE-CONSTITUTION) COMMITTEE.

Copy presented, of Report of the War Office (Re-constitution) Committee, Part II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Charitable Endowments (London). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. Francis Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 79.]

2. Bridlington Piers and Harbour. Copy of Abstract of the General Annual Account for the year ending 26th July, 1903 [by Act].

WINES IMPORTED.

Return ordered, "showing the quantity of wines at the various degrees of strength which were imported into the United Kingdom in 1903 from Spain, Portugal, Madeira, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Australasia, and other countries (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 100, of Session 1903)."—(*Sir Thomas Dewar.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates—Case of Mr. Bickham.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that Mr. George Bickham, of Capstone Road, Bournemouth, has applied twice this year to the Bournemouth police magistrates for a certificate of exemption under Section 2 of The Vaccination Act, 1898, and that when he applied on 15th February, 1904, one of the magistrates declined to allow the certificate to be granted, although the applicant had satisfied two other justices, and announced that the whole of the Bench must be satisfied; and whether, under these and similar circumstances constantly occurring, he will circularise the magistrates, stating that certificates of exemption cannot be withheld where the applicant satisfies two justices as required by the Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) This is not a matter in which I have any authority to take action. But I have made inquiry, and am informed that, as a fact, the Court in this case consisted of four magistrates, two of whom were in favour of, and two opposed to, the grant of the certificate.

Incidence of Import Duties in Denmark and the Argentine.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the estimated average incidence of the import duties levied by Denmark and the Argentine Republic, respectively, on the principal articles of British export from the United Kingdom, and the relative position this would assign to each of them in the scale of incidence given in the Blue-book for various Continental and other countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The figures for Denmark and the Argentine Republic, calculated on the same principle as those given for certain other countries; in Memorandum No. XVI. of Cd. 1761 of 1903, would be about 18 and 16 per cent. respectively. These countries would consequently follow Germany in the list given on page 171 of the Blue-book, the percentage for the Argentine being about the same as for Canada.

Imports of Linen Yarns from France and Belgium.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the weight and value in sterling of flax line yarns and flax tow yarns imported into England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, during the last five years from France and Belgium.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) No distinction is made in the import list between flax line yarns and flax tow yarns, both being classified as linen yarns. The following statement shows the imports of linen yarns from Belgium and France into England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, during the five years ended 31st December, 1903:—

Countries of Importation.	Belgium.		France.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	lbs.	£	lbs.	£
England . . .	27,321,884	978,680	1,230,946	54,638
Scotland . . .	28,983,354	981,419	17,371,327	589,675
Ireland . . .	40,512,378	1,506,717	—	—
Total . . .	96,817,616	3,466,816	18,602,273	644,313

Imports of Foreign Goods into Canada.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that British goods have been admitted into Canada since 1897 with a rebate of 25 per cent., which was increased in 1901 to 33⅓ per cent., he can state the total value of United States, German, and Belgian goods respectively imported into the North American Colonies in 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) As I informed the hon. Member for the Bassetlaw Division on Wednesday last,† the 25 per cent. rebate given by the Dominion of Canada began on the 1st August, 1898, and the 33⅓ per cent. rebate on 1st July, 1900. The values of the exports of domestic produce and manufacture from Germany, Belgium, and the United States to the British North American Colonies, as shown in the official trade statistics of these countries, in each of the years from 1897 to 1902 were as follow. Particulars for 1903 are not yet available.

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† See page, 840.

Year.	From Germany.	From Belgium.	From United States (years ended 30th June).
	£	£	£
1897	838,000	390,000	12,580,000
1898	1,195,000	452,000	16,580,000
1899	1,187,000	503,000	17,426,000
1900	1,000,000	631,000	18,990,000
1901	1,325,000	453,000	21,033,000
1902	1,937,000	366,000	21,923,000

Port of London Bill.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he proposes to proceed with the Port of London Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Government hope to proceed with this Bill as soon as the state of public business permits.

Afforestation in Scotland.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the suggestion of the Scottish Arboriculture Society has been brought under his notice that the Government should acquire an estate for afforestation; and whether he will consider the practicability of combining with the proposal the acquisition of ground for a national park in a mountainous district within easy reach of the great centres of population in Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I have received a resolution from the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society to which I suppose the hon. Member refers. I am unable to entertain any such proposal as that made by the hon. Member in the latter part of his Question.

Boots for Post Office Messengers—Irish Tenders

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that advertisements have been inserted in the Irish newspapers asking for tenders for boots for messengers in the service of the General Post Offices, and that samples of such boots have to be sent to a receiving depôt in London to be passed; and whether, seeing that, if an Irish manufacturer secures the contract, he has to pay carriage to London, he will arrange that boots for use in Ireland shall be passed at a depôt in that country.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Tenders have been invited from a number of firms in Ireland for the supplies required during the forthcoming financial year. If any of these firms should receive the contract, arrangements will be made for boots for use in Ireland to be delivered in Ireland.

Postmastership of Chirk.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why the postmastership of Chirk has been given to a person not previously employed in the postal service, and without knowledge of the duties to be performed; and will he state whether the vacancy was advertised in the usual way.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) When the vacancy for a sub-postmaster at Chirk occurred, several applications were received, and after due consideration of the qualifications of the several candidates, an appointment was made in the usual manner. The vacancy was not advertised, nor is it usual to do this in respect of offices of this class.

Compensation for Loss occasioned by Incorrectly Transmitted Telegrams.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to a recent case of a telegram which was addressed to General McCalmont on the message itself but to Colonel McCalmont on the envelope; and whether, in view of the delay in the delivery of the telegram and consequent loss to the addressee, he will state what action he proposes to take in the matter; and also what punishment was awarded in a case some time ago in which a clerk altered or changed a figure in a telegram from 7½d. to 8½d., in which case all compensation was refused to the sender for the loss incurred.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The first case mentioned by the hon. Member has just been brought to my notice, and I am making inquiry. I fear that the second case cannot be identified without further particulars.

Forestry in Scotland—State Aid.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board of Agriculture is in a position to offer State aid to the project for establishing an experimental area, or *Forst-garten*, in connection with the system of forestry instruction at Edinburgh.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailywn Fellowes.*) We have been in communication with the Scottish Education Department on this subject and I am in a position to say that if any educational institution, such, for example, as the East of Scotland Agricultural College, were to lay itself out to provide education in forestry and to establish an experimental area or *Forst-garten* in connection therewith, the Department would take such an item of equipment into consideration in determining the amount of any grant that they might give. There would, in fact, be no more difficulty about supporting an institution with a *Forst-garten* attached than there would be in supporting an institution with a chemical laboratory or a botanic garden.

Naval Expenditure.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the total estimated Naval Expenditure of this country in each of the financial years 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904–5, including Supplementary Votes and expenditure under Works Bills.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The actual total Naval Expenditure, including Supplementary Votes and Naval Works Acts, during the years 1900–1901, 1901–2, and 1902–3, was as follows:—1900–1901: Navy Votes, £29,998,529 4s. 7d; Naval Works Acts, £9,132,533 2s. 8d.; Total £32,131,062 7s. 3d. 1901–2: Navy Votes, £30,981,315 2s. 8d. (a); Naval Works Acts, £2,745,176 8s. 3d.; Total £33,726,491 10s. 11. 1902–3: Navy Votes, £31,003,977 9s. 11d. (b); Naval Works Acts, £3,198,016 14s. 9d.; Total £34,201,994 4s. 8d. The estimated Naval Expenditure during 1903–4 and 1904–5, is as follows:—1903–4, Navy Votes, £35,727,500 (c); Naval Works Acts, £3,493,500; Total £39,221,000. 1904–5: Navy Votes, £36,889,500 (d); Naval Works Acts £5,111,900; Total £42,001,400. The undermentioned Annuities in repayment of Advances in connection with the Naval Works Acts, 1895–1903, are included in the foregoing figures:—(a) £122,255; (b) £297,895; (c) £502,010; (d) £634,238.

Naval Expenditure of Foreign Countries.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the total naval expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, and America in the years 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, (*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The following table shows the total naval expenditure of the countries referred to:—

Year.	France.	Russia.	Germany.	America.
	£	£	£	£
1900 - - - -	12,511,054	8,662,801 2,300,000†	7,472,656	13,385,574
1901 - - - -	13,107,701	9,359,766 2,300,000†	9,624,956	16,012,438
1902 - - - -	12,271,948	10,667,983	10,029,063	16,203,916
1903 - - - -	12,538,861	12,349,567	10,252,014	16,824,058

Revenue Derived from Export Duty on Patent Fuel.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the amount of the revenue derived during the nine months ending the 31st December, 1903, from the levying of the coal duty on exports of patent fuel.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The net amount of duty received during the nine months ended 31st December, 1903, in respect of patent fuel exported, was £11,799.

Shankhaiwan Fort.

Mr. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will say whether the fort at Shankhaiwan, lately occupied by the Russians, was, on their vacation of it, occupied by the French and the tricolour hoisted; and whether he has any information as to what Power at present occupies the position.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The portion of the fort at Shankhaiwan, previously occupied by the Russians was, on its evacuation by them, for a time occupied by a French officer with a corporal's guard, and the French flag was hoisted. The French troops have, however, now left, and a party of Russian soldiers from Tientsin are at present in occupation.

Medical Officers and the Milk Supply.

Mr. SHARPE (Kensington, N.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a clause in the Public Health (Prevention of Diseases) Bill, 1888, seeking to give the medical officer of health powers to demand a full list of a dairyman's customers whose milk supply might come under suspicion, was struck out of the Bill; and that an identical clause, introduced in the Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Bill, 1890, was eliminated from that Bill; and whether the Board will in the present session make their recommendation to the Police and Sanitary Committee that the clause in question be omitted from the various Bills dealing with the milk supply.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I was not aware that the clause referred to was struck out of the Public Health (Prevention of Diseases) Bill, 1888. That Bill did not, I think, proceed beyond First Reading. The clause was, no doubt, eliminated from the Bill of 1890, and it was the practice of the Local Government Board for some years afterwards to draw attention to this circumstance in their Reports on Bills for local Acts. It was found, however, that, notwithstanding this, the clause was, in a large number of cases, allowed by Committees. Moreover, a similar provision was made for Scotland in The Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1897. In these circumstances the Board in 1899 discontinued the practice of drawing attention in their Reports to the action of Parliament in 1890, and I do not propose to resume that practice.

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† Represents one-fifth of a sum of £11,500,000 which was a special grant sanctioned in 1897 for new construction, to be spread over a period of five years. The details of this expenditure have not been published.

Actions for Conspiracy in County Courts.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will grant the Return relating to actions for conspiracy in County Courts, England, appearing on the Notice Paper for to-day.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I do not think this Return can be granted. I am not aware of any materials from which it could be compiled.

The Return referred to is as follows:—Address for Return for five years ended 31st day of December, 1903, showing the number of civil actions for conspiracy which have come before County Court Judges in England and the result in each case.

Tenders for Coal Supplies at Enniscorthy.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the names of the local papers in which tenders for the coal supplies for the model schools and other public buildings at Enniscorthy have been invited by advertisement.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The *Waterford News* of 29th May, and the *Waterford Chronicle* of 30th May, 1903.

Local Traffic in County Wexford.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what steps are about to be taken to develop the local traffic in county Wexford, and in particular in the Enniscorthy and Newtownbarry districts, under the proposed transit schemes.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is proposed, as I have already pointed out, to establish, experimentally, a motor-car service between Enniscorthy, Kilmuckridge, and Wexford.

Roman Catholic and Protestant Police at Ballynahinch.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain on what grounds a Roman Catholic constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary was substituted for a Protestant constable in Ballynahinch in January last, who recommended the transfer, and was the county inspectorship temporarily vacant at the time.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The transfer was recommended and carried out by the acting county inspector in the interests of the public service. There are now three Protestants and two Roman Catholic constables at this station.

Belfast Corporation Gas Accounts Audit.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the corporation gas accounts of the Belfast County Borough for the year ending 31st March, 1903, have not yet been audited, and why the Local Government Board for Ireland has demanded the sum of £50 from the corporation for audit fees for examining the corporation gas accounts, the work not having been performed.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The audit of the general accounts of the corporation for the year ended 31st March, 1903, was completed last December. The gas accounts are not included in the general accounts, and are always audited independently of the latter. The audit of the gas accounts will be undertaken as soon as possible. No demand has been made for the sum mentioned in respect of the audit of the gas accounts. This sum represents the balance of the fees due for the audit of the general accounts of the borough council.

Religion of Belfast Prison Officials.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many officials, male and female, are employed in Belfast Prison; their rank; and how many of them are Roman Catholics, and how many are Protestants.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The following is a statement of the religious denominations of officers employed in the Belfast Prison, so far as officially known and recorded: Male officers—Roman Catholics: 1 Chaplain, 1 chief warder, 1 store keeper, 2 clerks

1 trades warder, 1 hospital warder, 1 schoolmaster warder, 1 clerk warder, 19 ordinary warders. Female officers—Roman Catholics: 1 matron, 1 trade instructress, 1 store keeper, 6 assistant matrons, 1 servant. Male officers—Protestants: 2 Chaplains, 4 trades warders, 1 gardening instructor, 9 ordinary warders. Female officers—Protestants: 1 hospital nurse, 1 schoolmistress, 4 assistant matrons, 1 servant.

Actions for Conspiracy in Irish County Courts.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return relating to actions for conspiracy in County Courts, Ireland, appearing on the Notice Paper for to-day.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The information will be procured and communicated to the hon. Member. It is not, however, considered to be of sufficient importance to lay on the Table in the form of a Parliamentary Paper.

The Return referred to is as follows:—Return for five years ended 31st day of December, 1903, showing the number of civil actions for conspiracy which have come before County Court Judges in Ireland and the result in each case.

Purchase of the Estate of the late Captain Annesley.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the estate of the representatives of the late Captain Annesley, situated at and near Island, Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, has been offered to the Congested Districts Board for sale, and that an offer has been made by that Board; and whether, if there is any material difference between the demand and offer, he will advise the Congested Districts Board to make a further offer with a view to purchasing the estate for the purpose of enlarging holdings in that district.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Negotiations for the purchase of this estate were contemplated by the Congested Districts Board three years ago, but they were not proceeded with. The Board has no proposal before it at present in respect of the property. If such a proposal be made it will be considered.

Alleged Perjury at Ballinrobe Petty Sessions.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by two policemen against a publican named Faby, at the Ballinrobe Petty Sessions, quite recently, who was charged with a breach of the Licensing Acts, when the magistrates, having a doubt about the case, left the bench and proceeded to the spot; that on their return they declared it was impossible for the police to have seen what they swore to, and unanimously dismissed the case; and, if so, whether, in view of these facts, he will order a prosecution for perjury to be instituted forthwith.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Papers in the case have been laid before the Attorney-General, who is considering the matter. A decision will be come to by the Government as soon as some further information, which has been called for, is forthcoming.

Promotion in the Royal Garrison Artillery.

Mr. HARE (Norfolk, S.W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that there are now two vacancies of lieutenant-colonels and six of majors commanding depôt companies, R.G.A., he will say whether it is his intention to fill these vacancies by the promotion of junior officers of the service in the course of the next month or so.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) These two vacancies for lieutenant-colonels will be filled by the promotion of two majors in the Gazette of 1st March. There is only one depôt company Royal Garrison Artillery short of a major, and not six. When the two majors mentioned have been promoted there will be five vacancies for majors in the Royal Garrison Artillery, and these will be kept open for the absorption of five majors of Royal Garrison Artillery whose terms of staff employment will expire early in April.

Sums voted for Somaliland Expedition.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: To ask the Secretary of State for War what are the sums already voted for the Somaliland Expedition and at what dates were they respectively voted, and what sum, if any, will appear in the Estimates for 1904–5 for the purposes of this war.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*). The sums are as follows:—Supplementary Army Estimates (1902–3), dated 27th February, 1903, £50,100. (It was anticipated that £250,000 would be spent in the year 1902–3, but that of this sum £200,000 could be found out of savings on other Votes, so that it was only necessary to take £50,100 on Supplementary Estimate.) Army Estimates (1903–4), dated 27th February, 1903, £250,000. Supplementary Army Estimates (1903–4), £1,600,000. Total, £1,900,100. As explained in the Memorandum for Army Estimates, 1904–5, issued to-day, no provision for Somaliland has been included in the original Army Estimates.

Publication of Army Estimates.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War when the Army Estimates will be in the hands of Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The Army Estimates will be distributed to-morrow morning. I have to-day circulated a Memorandum which is already in the hands of Members.

Huts and Cantonments sent to South Africa—Place of Origin.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R. Otley): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the place of origin of the huts and cantonments sent out to South Africa for the accommodation of the troops.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold Forster.*) The place of origin of these huts for South Africa and their fittings was the United Kingdom.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

MR. LABOUCHERE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is the nature of the provision for the religious observances of the Chinese imported into the Transvaal which will be secured to them; whether the inquiry that is to be made by a British Officer in China, before he certifies that the contract between the Chinese labourer and the importer has been made voluntarily and with full knowledge of its terms by the labourer, will include an inquiry into whether he has been induced to make it, either by the pressure of some secret society or by the local authorities who wish to get rid of him as an idle or criminal person; and whether the wives and children, who may come with the Chinese labourers to the Transvaal, will be subjected to the same restrictions as to their place of residence as the labourers, and as to the obligation not to engage in any manual labour except mining, and not to trade.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttlelton.*) Lord Milner will, no doubt, avail himself of the advice of Mr. Evans, the Protector of Chinese of the Straits Settlements, whose services have been placed at his disposal, in dealing with the arrangements to be made for the religious observances of the Chinese, but I am not at present in a position to state what those arrangements will be. Special care will be taken to secure the contract being made voluntarily andto prevent the engagement of undesirable labourers. The Lieutenant-Governor will make suitable regulations; precisely the same restrictions cannot, of course, be applied to the women and children as to the labourers.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "Prince of Wales"—Defective Armour Plates.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the new battleship "Prince of Wales," which has just completed her gun trials at Chatham, and is to be ready for commission by the end of March, has armour plates around her foremost barbette which are developing fissures and cracks, and scaling off in patches of considerable size and thickness; and, if so, whether she will be allowed to go to sea with defective protection, or whether it will be necessary to unbuild, to remove the defective plates; and, in such case, whether the manufacturers of the armour plates will be called upon to bear the entire expense incurred.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): One of the armour plates of the forward barbette of H.M.S. "Prince of Wales" has developed defects on its face since being worked into the ship, but these defects are not of such a serious character as the hon. Member's Question implies, and unless they should prove to be progressive, it will not be necessary to remove and replace the plate. It has been decided to keep the plate under observation for a time, but should an extension of the defects occur, it may be necessary to call upon the manufacturers to provide a new plate.

New War Ships' Armaments.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it will be necessary to provide new guns for the two Chilian vessels recently purchased by the Government; and, if so, at what cost.

MR. PRETYMAN: It will not be necessary to supply new guns for the "Triumph" and "Swiftsure." The guns already provided are suitable, and do not require to be replaced.

Naval Works Act Expenditure.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the amount that will be spent by 31st March of the present year under the Naval Works Act.

MR. PRETYMAN: The estimated expenditure up to 31st March next under the Naval Works Act of 1903 is £3,493,500.

War Office Reconstitution Committee.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when a further Report from the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee will be presented; and whether it will deal with the sanitary administration of the Army, to which no reference is made in the Report recently issued. The hon. Member said the first part of the Question had been practically answered already by the official publication of the second part of the Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was convenient to give any information as to the second part of the Question.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman say why this Report appears in the morning papers to-day before it has been delivered to Members of the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): This Report was not made to me. I am exceedingly sorry it is not in the hands of hon. Members. I thought it was. It certainly ought to have been, and I will see that it is put into their hands at the earliest possible moment. I think the point of sanitary administration will be dealt with in the third part of the Report, which is not yet presented. It is stated in the earlier part of the Report that that is the intention of the Committee.

DR. FARQUHARSON: Will the third part of the Report be presented in time for its discussion upon the Army Estimates?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think not; but I hope this Report will not be debated upon the Army Estimates, but will be dealt with by itself. I think, in view of the importance of the questions raised, that would be more satisfactory to the House.

Irish Military Tailors.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that in the list of firms recommended to young officers in Ireland from whom they should order their uniforms and other necessaries there are several firms who do not pay trade-union labour; and that there are several who do not manufacture the work in their own workshops but give it out to be done by outworkers; and whether, in view of the recommendations of the Commission appointed to inquire into the conditions of labour in the tailoring trade, he will see that such goods are manufactured in sanitary workshops and free from underpaid conditions.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As there is no War Department contract of any sort made with these firms the conditions of manufacture do not come within the scope of War Department inquiry.

Assam Excise Administration.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the inquiry which was instituted into the allegations made against the Excise administration of Assam in a memorandum issued by Mr. James Buckingham, C.I.E., in 1902, on behalf of the Indian Tea Association, has been concluded; and when the Report will be published.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The inquiry has been concluded by the local authorities, and I hope shortly to receive their Report, together with the views of the Government of India upon it.

Indian Army—Major-General's Commands.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can state whether the senior officers of the Indian Army are selected for Major-General's commands by a selection board in India, by the Secretary of State for India, or by the Commander-in-Chief in India or England.

MR. BRODRICK: These officers are appointed by the Government of India, on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief in India.

India Coolies and Transvaal Mines.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table the correspondence between the Government of India and the High Commissioner of South Africa relative to the importation of Indian coolies into the Transvaal.

MR. BRODRICK: There has been no correspondence between the Government of India and the High Commissioner on this subject, and it is not proposed to lay any Papers on the Table.

Canada and Preferential Tariffs.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state if a request has been received by His Majesty's Government from the Canadian Government for preferential tariff treatment; and, if so, will he say what answer, if any, was sent.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): There is no record in my Department of any such request beyond the statement contained in the memorandum of the Canadian Ministers printed in Parliamentary Paper Cd. 1299 of October, 1902.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance Regulations.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will, without prejudice to the power of making further regulations from time to time, cause to be forthwith prepared such and so many regulations regarding the Chinese labour which it is proposed to import into the Transvaal as may be, in the first instance, necessary in order to carry out the provisions of the Ordinance and the pledges which he has himself given; and whether he will cause these regulations to be communicated to Parliament before authorising the embarkation of any Chinese for South Africa.

*MR. LYTTELTON: These regulations are being prepared. They will be laid upon the Table as soon as they are completed. I will not sanction the embarkation of any labourers till I am satisfied that the pledges which I have given to the House are embodied in the regulations. Beyond this I cannot give any further undertaking.

MR. BRYCE: Do I understand that labourers may be embarked before the House has seen the regulations?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: No, Sir; that will probably not be the fact. My right hon. friend will see that there must be a very considerable proceeding by way of explanation of the contract, and so forth, in China before any embarkation can take place. The regulations which prescribe that procedure will be laid on the Table immediately they are passed.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the regulations under the Chinese Labour Ordinance will be framed before Chinese labourers are recruited in China, if not, what steps will be taken to enable the superintendent of labourers in China to inform the labourers of the proposed terms of service.

*Mr. LYTTLETON: Yes, Sir, the regulations which concern the terms of service as laid down in the contract must obviously be framed before definite contracts are made.

Prices of Stores for Chinese Coolies.

Mr. ASHTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, under the Chinese Labour Ordinance, any steps will be taken by the Government to regulate the prices of goods to be supplied to the coolies by the stores in the compounds; and, if not, how they propose to prevent the coolies being mulcted of their wages.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: If the superintendent of labourers finds it necessary, it will be open to the Lieutenant-Governor to make regulations on the subject, but, as I understand, the labourers will be able to go out to make their purchases. I am in communication with Lord Milner on the subject.

Transvaal Mines—Sunday Regulations

Mr. ASHTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that the Sunday Labour Law in the Transvaal prohibits labour in the mines on Sunday, he will use his influence to secure that the coolies shall be allowed to go outside of the compounds on Sundays.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: The extent to which it will be convenient and desirable to grant permits under Clause 19 of the Ordinance must be left for settlement in the light of experience.

British Columbia and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that agitation existed in the Province of British Columbia, Dominion of Canada, against Chinese and Japanese immigration into that province; that for many years, at every session of the Legislature of the Province of British Columbia, Acts were enacted prohibiting the immigration of Japanese, and were disallowed by the Dominion Government at the request and on the advice of His Majesty's Government; and, if so, will he state whether an Act passed at the last session of the British Columbia Legislature against Japanese immigration has been allowed and is now law.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave on the 15th instant to the Question put to me on this subject by the hon. Member for Dundee.†

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked if the Bill had now become law and was not to be disallowed.

Mr. Lyttelton's answer was inaudible.

Canada and Chinese Immigrants.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that the Canadian Government impose a tax of $500 per head in the matter of Chinese immigration into Canada, he can state if he has any official information showing the effect of this restriction upon Chinese immigration into Canada.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: The capitation tax of $500 was only imposed last year, and I have no information as to its effect on immigration.

Quebec and Irish Home Rule.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table of the

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1320.

House a copy of the resolution in favour of Home Rule for Ireland adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec, Dominion of Canada, within the last two years, and of the answer sent.

MR. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

South Africa—Free Grants of Land to Soldier Settlers.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state if any grants of land in the new South African Colonies, and, if any, how many, have been made to Yeomanry or Reservists who took part in the late war.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The hon. Member will see by reference to the Ordinances printed at pages 25 and 69 of Cd. 1463 that no provision is made for free grants of land in the new Colonies, though preference is to be given to those who served in the war. I will request the Governor to report how many Yeomen and Reservists have taken up land under those Ordinances.

Crown Agents.

MR. ASHTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Crown Agents for the Colonies are appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; whether the staff of the Crown Agents is appointed by them; and whether the commission allowed to be levied by the Crown Agents on stores, railways, general business, etc., goes in relief of the general cost of the maintenance of the office or is part of the remuneration allowed to the Crown Agents individually; and, if so, how is it divided amongst them.

*MR. LYTTELTON: (1) The Crown Agents for the Colonies are appointed by the Secretary of State; (2) Their staff is appointed by themselves; (3) All the commissions levied by them, under the authority of the Secretary of State, go into the general fund, out of which the office is maintained and on which the salaries fixed for the Agents individually are charged; and (4) no part of such commissions is divided amongst them, and they receive no remuneration whatever beyond their fixed salaries.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is there not now a very large balance of that general fund not applied?

[No answer was returned.]

Land Concessions in East Africa.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, pending survey and suitable reserves being made for natives, he will assure the House that no further concessions of land in East Africa will be granted to syndicates.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): Every application for land must be treated on its merits and every concession granted is subject to the provisions of the Crown Lands Ordinance, 1902, which protects the rights of natives. An extensive tract of country is being reserved as grazing ground for the Masai, and His Majesty's Commissioner has been instructed to make no further grants within this area.

Belligerents in Neutral Ports.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any international undertaking that belligerent ships of war should restrict their stay in neutral ports to twenty-four hours, or whether such instructions are only applicable to British ports.

*EARL PERCY: There is no such international undertaking. The rule was adopted by this country in 1862, and, since that date, several foreign States have issued similar rules in connection with their observance of neutrality.

Brussels Sugar Convention—Permanent Bureau.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that it is the duty of the permanent bureau set up under the Brussels Sugar Convention to collect, translate, arrange, and publish information of all kinds respecting legislation on and statistics of sugar, not only in the contracting States but in other States as well, he will say if any such information has yet been published by the permanent bureau; and, if so, when it will be laid before Parliament.

*EARL PERCY: The *procès verbaux* of the sittings of the Permanent Commission in June and July last, as well as fascicules 1–8 concerning the legislation of various countries, were sent to the Library of the House of Commons on the 26th of November. Fascicules 9 and 10 dealing with the legislation of Denmark and the Danish Antilles were sent to the Library on the 25th instant. Subsequent publications when received will be laid in due course.

MR. LOUGH: Have any statistics been published by the Bureau?

*EARL PERCY: Yes.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Would it be possible to have the *procès verbaux* laid on the Table, or are they too long?

*EARL PERCY: They are exceedingly bulky.

Alleged Seizure of British Colliers by Russia.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the seizure by Russian destroyers in the Red Sea of British steamers laden with coal to Japan; and whether, in view of the fact of coal not having been declared contraband of war by Russia, and that over 15 ships of a total value, including cargo, of over £700,000, have sailed from Cardiff under similar conditions and insured in London in the belief that coal was not declared contraband of war by Russia, he will state whether His Majesty's Government intend to take any action in the matter.

*EARL PERCY: His Majesty's Government have no information respecting the alleged seizures. They have been informed that the Russian Government are at present considering regulations in regard to contraband visits on the high seas, Prize Courts, &c., and that these regulations will shortly be communicated to the Powers.

Central African Natives and the Transvaal Mines.

SIR JOHN GORST: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Papers promised last session on the result of the experiment of importing Central African Natives into the Transvaal for labour in the mines will be laid upon the Table of the House.

*EARL PERCY: I propose to lay the Papers shortly.

Continental Labour Farms.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state where copies of the Report furnished by His Majesty's Consuls on the Working of Labour Farms on the Continent can be had.

*EARL PERCY: The Returns asked for have only lately been completed and are now in course of revision for Parliament.

Command of the Macedonian Gendarmerie.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Turkish Government has insisted that General Giorgis, who has been selected for the command of the gendarmerie in Macedonia, shall be subject to the control of Mustapha Pasha, who has been placed as a Turkish officer over that corps or of such other Turkish officer as may be appointed by the Sultan to that post; whether the European Powers, with whom the scheme for the gendarmerie is being arranged, have refused to agree to this demand, and in particular what has been the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards it; and what is the present position of the gendarmerie scheme.

EARL PERCY: We have received no information that any such demand has been made by the Turkish Government. General de Giorgis and the Committee of Staff Officers of the six Powers have, we understand, drawn up a statement of the conditions which they think necessary for the successful reorganisation of the gendarmerie. It is hoped that its immediate presentation to and acceptance by the Porte will enable the officers to proceed to their posts without further delay.

MR. BRYCE: Do I understand that General de Giorgis will be in supreme command of the gendarmerie and that no Turkish officer will be placed over him?

EARL PERCY: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Current Year's Revenue.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has reason to anticipate that the revenue of the current financial year will be sufficient to provide for the new burdens created by the Supplementary Estimates for the Navy, Army, and Civil Services.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): No, sir.

Royal Commission on Our Coal Supplies.

SIR GEORGE NEWNES (Swansea Town): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will lay at an early date upon the Table of the House the evidence before the Royal Commission on our Coal Supplies, so far as it relates to the coal tax.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Coal Commission has already published one volume of Evidence, and another volume, I understand, is in the hands of the printer for press. It will therefore appear shortly. I am informed that it is expected that the final volume of Evidence and the Report will be published this year; and that the evidence concerning the coal tax, together with the conclusions respecting it arrived at by the Commission, will appear in these final volumes.

Produce of the Coal Tax.

SIR GEORGE NEWNES: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the amount of the revenue which has accrued from the coal tax during the nine months ending 31st December, 1903.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The net amount of Revenue which accrued from the coal tax during the nine months ended 31st December, 1903, was £1,583,903.

Adulteration of Whiskey in Bond.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the character of some blends of so-called Irish and Scotch malt whiskey; whether he is aware that a blend made up in a bonded warehouse in Scotland, the total amount of which was 2,500 gallons, was composed of about 2,000 gallons of English spirit and about 500 gallons of raw grain patent spirit less than one year old, and was sold to the public as genuine malt whiskey; and, if so, will he state what steps the Treasury intend to take to safeguard the public.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information to confirm the allegations made; but if whiskey which is not made of malt is sold as malt whiskey, it is an offence against the Merchandise Marks Act.

MR. FLAVIN: If I send him a sample made from raw grain spirit, will the right hon. Gentleman take the responsibility of sampling it himself?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir, I cannot pretend to be an authority on the subject.

MR. FLAVIN: You might do your best by trying it.

Street Traffic—Regulations as to Covered Vans.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will endeavour to arrange for regulations to be issued in regard to covered vans, so that the extent of view to be provided for the driver under the London County Council bye-law, recently confirmed by the Secretary of State, may be made perfectly clear.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have no power to make any such regulations; and it seems to me that the terms of the bye-law which I indicated to my hon. friend the other day are sufficiently clear, viz., that the driver must have a full and uninterrupted view in front and abreast of him on each side. Whether in any given case this requirement is satisfied is a question which must be settled according to the facts of the case—by a Court of Law, if necessary.

Prison Treatment of Passive Resisters.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Alderman O'Connor, of Fulham, recently imprisoned in Chelmsford Gaol for default in payment of rates; and, if so, will he say whether it is customary for such an offence to compel prisoners to pick oakum, to search them every day, and to supply them with ritualistic tracts.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The prisoner in question was treated in the same way as other prisoners who come within the rules for debtors. Such prisoners must be given some employment, and when the term of detention is so short as fourteen days it is sometimes impossible to find any better employment than oakum-picking. Alderman O'Connor was searched on reception, but only once after that. He was supplied with a Bible, Prayer-book, Hymn-book, and a book called "The Narrow Way" (which I am assured cannot be called a ritualistic tract), and a library book. He made no complaints.

Sale of Poisons—Southwark Inquest.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a coroner's inquest, held at Southwark on the 23rd inst., when the jury, in returning a verdict of death by misadventure, added a rider that the sellers of acids and all poisons should be compelled to label the vessel with the name of the substance it contained and the word poison, and that no poison should be sold to young children except in sealed bottles; and, if so, will the question of legislation on the subject receive his consideration.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have been asked by my right hon. friend to answer this Question. I am not aware of the facts of this particular case, but as to further legislation with regard to the sale of poisons I would refer my hon. friend to the statement made by the Prime Minister on the 4th March last,† indicating that the matter only awaited a favourable opportunity.

Sugar Surtax.

MR. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the nature of the matter to be brought before the Permanent Commission, established under the Brussels Sugar Convention, in March next, with reference to the limitation of the surtax laid down in Article III. of the Convention, the Government propose to take the advice of experts in the trades interested.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have taken steps to learn the views of those interested in the trades referred to, and I shall be glad to consult further with any expert who may be suggested by the Association representing these trades.

British Merchant Crews—Desertions at San Francisco.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the attention of the Board of Trade has been directed to the percentage of British merchant crews who desert their ships at San Francisco, forfeiting their wages and effects, in contrast with those of French ships, whose owners have a pecuniary interest in retaining them; and whether he will confer with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a view to amending the Merchant Shipping Act, Section 232, so as to assimilate the procedure in regard to unpaid wages of deserters to that provided in the case of seamen deceased, or will otherwise deal with the matter.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxviii., 1344.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My attention has been called to the percentage of British merchant seamen who desert at San Francisco, forfeiting their wages and effects, as compared with the percentage of deserters from French vessels at the same port, and the matter has been referred to in official documents which I have received from the United States. The question of amending Section 232 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, is under my consideration, and the Board of Trade are in communication with various bodies representing British shipowners on the subject.

The Irish Land Act.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the £50,000 a year for four years, reserved out of the Irish Development Grant Fund for expenses connected with the loan for the purposes of the Irish Land Act, of last year, will be available to meet the discount at which the stock may have to be floated; and, if not, will he explain exactly to what expenses that sum is to be devoted.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The four sums of £50,000 to which the hon. Member refers will not be available for meeting the charges occasioned by the issue of stock at a discount. It is provided by the Act that these charges are to be paid out of the Guarantee Fund. The sums in question are intended to form a working balance of the Land Purchase Fund to meet temporarily the charges upon that fund which may arise before moneys applicable to them are received. For instance, dividends on the Stock will accrue for payment before annuities are in hand for paying them; and cash will be needed out of which immediate advances can be made in anticipation of issues of Stock.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the discounts will have to be paid out of the Guarantee Fund?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: This £50,000 is part of the Guarantee Fund. Does it mean that no part of the £50,000 is to be set aside year by year for four years to meet the expenses of the flotation, and that the discounts at which the stock may be issued will have to be paid out of the Development Grant?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Do I understand that the £50,000 set aside will not be sufficient to meet the expenses?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No Sir. I had better repeat the first sentence of my answer—

> "The four sums of £50,000 to which the hon. Member refers will not be available for meeting the charges occasioned by the issue of stock at a discount. It is provided by the Act that those charges are to be paid out of the Guarantee Fund."

MR. JOHN REDMOND: This is a matter of vital importance. It was clearly understood by all of us that the £50,000 were to be set aside for the cost of flotation, including the discounts. Are we to understand now that the cost of discounts is to be paid out of the Development Grant in addition to the sum taken from that fund for the cost of flotation?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I quite agree that the matter is an important one. Possibly if the hon. Gentleman wishes to pursue the subject he will be good enough to put a further Question on the Paper, because I ought not to speak without having time for consideration. But the four sums of £50,000 were not intended on either side of the House to pay the cost of flotation.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: It was so understood by us.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Yes.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: We may possibly be using language in a different sense. I should like any further Question put down.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: If the right hon. Gentleman is right every one of us who supported the Bill were under an entire misapprehension. I will certainly put down a further Question.

Unexpended Balances of Irish Votes.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state on what Votes the unexpended balance of £718,136 7s. 11d. arose on Irish Votes during the last ten years; whether this sum is placed to the credit of any Irish account so that it may be available for Irish purposes, and if not, what has become of this money; and whether, beyond the above amount during the last ten years, there have been any savings from the Votes for the Post Office, Revenue Departments, or other Votes of a general character on the amounts stated in the annual Returns as having been expended in Ireland; and, if so, what is the additional amount of these savings and to what purposes have they been applied.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The aggregate surrender includes surpluses on all the Irish Votes. The unexpended balances on Irish Votes are treated in the same way as similar balances on English and Scotch Votes—that is to say, they go in reduction of the total charge against revenue, and if, as the result, the revenue exceeds the expenditure for the year, the surplus is by statute applied to the Old Sinking Fund in reduction of debt. The amounts shown in the Financial Relations Returns as expended on Irish Account are not based on the voted grants, but on the issues made from the Exchequer to meet actual expenditure, so far as it can be ascertained.

MR. LOUGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that his predecessor said that any savings effected in these Irish Votes would be applied solely to Irish purposes?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware of anything in that direction at all. Which predecessor does my hon. friend mean?

MR. LOUGH: The last but one.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think he could have made a statement in such wide general terms. Ireland is treated in this matter exactly as England and Scotland are.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will grant a Return showing how the amount of £718,136 7s. 11d. returned by him as the amount of unexpended balances surrendered to the Imperial Exchequer by the Irish Government in the last ten years is made up, giving the various heads and the amount under each head.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: These figures are published every year. They appear in the column headed "Surpluses" in the "Abstract Statement showing the Appropriation of Grants" which is appended to the annual Reports of the Public Accounts Committee.

Irish Local Government Board Officials.

MR. P. A. MCHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant a Return of the names of the persons who have been appointed inspectors, auditors, and arbitrators of the Local Government Board for Ireland since the Local Government Act of 1898 was passed, giving in each case the tenure of the appointment, the date on which the appointment was made, the qualifications of the persons appointed, and stating what test, if any, such qualifications were subjected to.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): A Return containing the information desired in the Question is being prepared and will be forwarded to the hon. Member when complete.

Irish Resident Magistrate Major Gosselin.

MR. P. A. MCHUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state on what date Major Nicholas Gosselin was appointed a resident magistrate for Ireland; the various places in which he has been stationed since the date of his appointment; where he is stationed at the present time; whether he has discharged any duties except those of resident magistrate since the date of his appointment; and, if so, what is the nature of those duties.

MR. WYNDHAM: Major Gosselin was appointed resident magistrate on the 2nd August, 1882. He was stationed for a short time at Killeshandra, county Cavan, and at Sligo. He was subsequently seconded for employment on special duty and ceased to act under the Irish Executive. He retired on pension on the 12th instant.

Irish Labourers Bill.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will immediately introduce the promised measure dealing with labourers in Ireland, so as to afford ample time for the consideration of its provisions by those specially interested in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Prime Minister will answer this Question to-morrow.

Cooscroum (Kerry) Improvement Works.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board intend to carry out the promised improvements at Cooscroum, county Kerry, without any further delay.

MR. WYNDHAM: The delay is unavoidable. Work will be commenced on the landing place next month.

Dublin Natural History Museum.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Board of Visitors of the Dublin Natural History Museum, in which it it stated, page 414, that the staff has not been increased during the past twenty-five years; whether he is aware that attention has been repeatedly called to this want of additional assistance in previous years; and whether, in view of the fact that catalogues and guides cannot be prepared and that the work of sorting and classifying the specimens is largely at a standstill for want of more skilled help, he will provide permanent additional assistance as has been done in the case of the British Museum.

MR. WYNDHAM: The question of the sufficiency of the staff of the Natural History Museum is at present engaging the consideration of the new Department.

Land Purchase in King's County—Doolan's Case.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been directed to the position under the Land Purchase Act of Amos Palmer Doolan, of Shinrone, King's county, who was evicted in December, 1888, by his landlord, John Lloyd, esquire, Gloster; is he aware that Doolan has made application to the Estates Commissioners for reinstatement; that his rent was £143 per annum; that the holding is now let at £90 per eleven months, which expires on the 25th February; and that Llewellyn W. M. Lloyd, the present landlord, proposes to sell this property or is in communication with the Estates Commissioners on the subject; and whether, before the sale is sanctioned, Doolan's case will receive due consideration.

MR. WYNDHAM: An application for reinstatement has been received on behalf of this evicted tenant. It will be duly considered.

Constable Walsh of Rostrevor.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can state if the young lady who complained of being molested by a police constable in Rostrevor, who stopped her in the street and insisted on giving her readings from the Bible, has been afforded an opportunity of identifying him; whether constable Walsh has denied that he is the constable concerned; and what steps have been taken by the authorities to ascertain the identity of the constable concerned.

MR. WYNDHAM: The lady in question was interviewed by the district inspector. She stated she was unable to identify the constable who read to her a passage from a book, which she believed was a Bible. Constable Walsh denies that he ever gave, or offered to give, a Bible to any Roman Catholic lady. I am inquiring whether he ever read a portion of the Bible to a young lady. But short of this, however, it is not proposed to take further action in the matter, of which sufficient notice has already been taken.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary has intimated to constable Walsh of Rostrevor his disapproval of the constable's conduct in attending in uniform certain open-air sectarian meetings in that town; whether the Inspector-General has expressed his disapproval of the constable's conduct in entering into religious controversies; and whether the Inspector-General has conveyed his disapproval of the constable's conduct in distributing sectarian newspapers to workmen in the town.

MR. WYNDHAM: The constable attended in uniform an open-air meeting of the Church Army. The Inspector-General informed him that it would be more prudent to attend outdoor religious services in plain clothes. He was also informed that he should avoid entering into religious controversy or distributing copies of the *British Workman* newspaper.

MR. MACVEAGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House on whose authority he informed the House last week that this constable had not been censured at all?

MR. WYNDHAM: The intimation did not amount to censure, and in any case I think the hon. Member attributes undue importance to the matter.

MR. MACVEAGH: I think I am entitled to ask the Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is not in order, on the answer to one Question, to revert to the answer to a previous Question.

MR. MACVEAGH: May I point out that if I hand in notice of a Question dealing with a reply to a previous Question the Clerk at the Table at once says I am not entitled to put it?

*MR. SPEAKER: And quite rightly.

MR. MACVEAGH: Can I ask this——

*MR. SPEAKER: I cannot advise the hon. Member what sort of Question will be in order. He must present it at the Table in the ordinary way, and objection will be taken if it is objectionable, and can, if necessary, be dealt with by me.

MR. MACVEAGH: I do not want to argue the question, but——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member had better proceed to his next Question.

Head Constable Moore, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. MACVEAGH; I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how long Head Constable Moore has been engaged on temporary duty at Greencastle, county Antrim, and when the temporary duty is likely to come to an end.

MR. WYNDHAM: Since the 10th August last. There is no intention at present to withdraw this Head Constable from Greencastle.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state in what temporary character this constable is employed and how many years he will be so employed?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have answered the Question on the Paper, and have stated there is no intention of withdrawing him.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is it a fact that this man has been engaged for twelve months on temporary duty, and will the right hon. Gentleman state how much longer he will be so engaged?

MR. WYNDHAM: As long as it is considered advisable.

Land Purchase in Galway.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if any sales or transfers of estates have under the provisions of the Land Act of last session been effected in the agricultural districts situate within the limits of the Parliamentary Borough of Galway; whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been directed to the uneconomic holdings at Castlegar and other agricultural districts within the limits of the borough; and whether, in view of the fact that tracts of available land now used as grazing farms are in the vicinity of these holdings he will, in order to decrease emigration from this district, direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board to this part of the west of Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: No overtures have been made to the Estates Commissioners for the purchase of lands within the area mentioned in the Question. Any representations made to the Commissioners or to the Congested Districts Board in this respect will be duly considered.

Railway Rates from Galway to Dublin.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether any representations have been made by the Department of Agriculture to the Midland and Great Western Railway Company of Ireland with respect to the rates charged for the carriage of goods and agricultural products from Galway to Dublin; and, if so, what answer was received.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department has not received any complaints from traders in respect to this matter. If such are made they will receive the careful consideration of the Department.

Ballinrobe Petty Sessions—Licensing Prosecution.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Allen Bell, R.M., in presiding at the Ballinrobe Petty Sessions a few days ago, declared that the evidence of two policemen who had preferred a charge against a publican, named Faby, under the Licensing Acts was untrue, and after personally investigating the case dismissed it on the merits; and will he state whether the resident magistrate reported this case to the Attorney-General with a view to a prosecution for perjury; and, if not, will he state what steps he proposes to take in view of his conduct.

MR. WYNDHAM: The papers in the case have been laid before the Attorney-General, who is considering the matter. A decision will be come to by Government as soon as some further information, which has been called for, is forthcoming.

Insurance of Fishing Boats.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board has had under consideration for more than a year an insurance scheme for fishing boats; is he now in a position to say what decision has been arrived at; and, if so, in view of the approach of the spring fishing season, what steps should be taken by the fishermen to avail themselves of the scheme.

MR. WYNDHAM: The preparation of a scheme has necessitated careful consideration and inquiries. A draft of a proposed scheme will come before the Board at its next meeting, when it is expected that any unsettled questions will be disposed of.

Evicted Tenants in County Cork.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many applications for reinstatement have been received by the Estates Commissioners from evicted tenants in Cork county since November last; and, if any independent action will be taken by the Estates Commissioners by means of which some of these evicted tenants may be reinstated during the approaching spring.

MR. WYNDHAM: Four hundred and twenty-nine such applications have been received. Upon the sale of estates in the county the inspectors have instructions to report on these applications with a view to the reinstatement of evicted tenants.

Street Preaching in Cork.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 14th and 21st instant attacks were made on street preachers in Cork; that on the latter date a man named Henry Morris, of Jewish persuasion, was beaten and robbed; and that on mounting a side car the carman refused to drive him; can he state how many arrests were made; and what action, if any, he intends to take to prevent such attacks.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No attack was made on the preachers on either of the dates mentioned. A large hostile crowd had assembled on each occasion, but the preachers were effectually protected by the police from assault or injury. The painful and deplorable assault committed on Mr. Morris, who is not a preacher, was not witnessed by the police, and he is unable to identify his assailants. No arrests have yet been made in connection with the assault, though vigilant inquiries have been, and are still being, made by the police. The police will continue to afford every possible protection to the preachers.

Mr. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the unanimous feelings of all religious denominations in the south of Ireland is that street preaching should not be tolerated.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I cannot reply to that.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Protestants of Cork have strongly protested against this intolerable street preaching nuisance.

Mr. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any reason to believe that the man Morris was attacked in consequence of his being a Jew? or it was for a political reason?

Mr. SLOAN: Is it not a fact that the citizens of Cork who attempted to rescue this man were themselves molested?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of the fact. The subject of street preaching has often been discussed in this House and the opinions of the Government are well known.

Several Hon. Members rose to put further Questions, but the Speaker declined to allow the matter to proceed further.

Fair Rent Cases in County Roscommon.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that some 500 tenants on the Murphy and De Freyne estates, in the county Roscommon, have recently served notices to have a fair rent fixed; and, if so, whether he will urge the Land Commission to take steps to expedite the hearing of cases in distressed districts; and whether he will recommend the Land Commission to immediately detach special Sub-Commissioners to deal with the De Freyne and Murphy estates.

Mr. WYNDHAM: All fair rent applications from these districts, lodged before the 1st January, were heard on the 2nd and 3rd instant. Some 200 applications have been received since the 1st January, and a Sub-Commission will be sent down to hear them as soon as arrangements can be made.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In view of the peculiar circumstances connected with this district, will the right hon. Gentleman communicate to the Land Commissioners his desire to have these cases tried as soon as possible?

Mr. WYNDHAM: They will be tried as soon as arrangements can be made.

Railway Facilities in County Limerick.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution, unanimously adopted by the traders and others in Abbeyfeale, in the county of Limerick, complaining of the action of the Great

Southern and Western Railway Company in withdrawing the Sunday trains between Limerick and Tralee; whether he is aware that the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company ran these trains continually for years, and that by the amalgamation of this company with the former the public were guaranteed equal facilities to those heretofore enjoyed by them; and, if so, whether, in view of the loss and inconvenience caused by the discontinuance of these trains, he will take steps to have them continued.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution has not been received. I understand, however, that the trains referred to were postal service trains and were discontinued because the receipts from the Post Office authorities, together with receipts from ordinary traffic, did not cover working expenses. This being so, the Department is not in a position usefully to make any representations to the company as suggested.

Roxboro' Road School, Limerick.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if the money which has accumulated in the hands of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland on account of the Roxboro' Road School, Limerick, has been yet applied, as he last year, in answer to a Question†, stated that it might, to the purposes of technical education in the city of Limerick; and, if not, will he explain how the case now stands.

Mr. WYNDHAM: This matter cannot conveniently be discussed in the form of an answer to a Question. It has formed the subject of correspondence with the Borough Council of Limerick, which the hon. Member has probably seen, and, if not, I shall be happy to supply him with a copy.

Irish Tourist Services.

Mr. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the dates on which the tourists' services were established between Listowel and Tarbert by car, between Tarbert and Kilrush by steamer, and between Ennistimon and Ballyvaughan by car; and whether he will say if the service was a daily one; and, if not, what portion of the year was covered by the service between Listowel and Tarbert, Tarbert and Kilrush, and Ennistimon and Ballyvaughan.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have called for but not yet received this information, and must ask the Hon. Member to repeat the Question to-morrow.

Knockavilla Catholics and the Police.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that for some time past policemen are in the habit of watching the Roman Catholic church and the congregation at Knockavilla, county Tipperary, during the hours of worship on Sundays; is he aware of the views of the congregation upon the action of the police, and will he state for what purpose they are there.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has not been correctly informed. The police attend service in this church and afterwards remain in the village for the purpose of enforcing the Licensing Laws.

Tulla Labourers' Cottages Scheme.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the Local Government Board has not sanctioned certain schemes for the erection of labourers' cottages in the Tulla, county Clare, union district, which have been presented by the local council.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The schemes were inquired into so long ago as 1895. They were not then sanctioned for reasons which were communicated in detail to the local authority. If fresh representations are now submitted to the Board by the district council they will be considered.

Arklow Harbour.

Mr. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the fact that Arklow Harbour was constructed in opposition to the protest of the local authorities, by whom the Board of Works plans were condemned; and whether, in view of the present condition of the harbour, and of the fact that the industries of the town are threatened with extinction, he will see that the necessary repairs are carried out by the Board of Works, who are responsible for the construction of the harbour.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxix., 358.

Mr. WYNDHAM: A committee of persons locally interested raised objections to the plans. Other persons in the locality supported the plans, which, I have already stated, were approved by two eminent harbour engineers whom the Government deputed to report upon the Board's scheme. The silting up of the harbour does not prove that the scheme was faulty. In reply to the concluding inquiry I have nothing to add to my former statements on the subject.

Galway Rates.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that an area within the town limits of Galway is covered with ruins and waste buildings which are exempt from the payment of rates, and which the owners will not put in repair; and, if so, whether, in view of the representations of the urban council of Galway in this matter, it is his intention to introduce legislation this session which will enable the council to deal effectively with the matter and to levy rates on this area.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): There is no intention to introduce legislation dealing specially with this particular case. If the hon. Member wishes to ascertain what are the intentions of Government with regard to any measure dealing with local taxation generally he should address his Question to the Prime Minister.

Dublin Post Office.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why officers promoted in Dublin recently have not been called on to perform the duties proper to their class, namely, supervising duties in the sorting office; and state whether he is aware that an officer on the clerk's class who was promoted a few years ago has never done a supervising duty in the sorting office,

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I am making inquiry on the subject, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Question Withdrawn.

The following Question appeared on the Paper, but Mr. Nannetti declined to put it as it had been so altered at the Table as to destroy its meaning:

Mr. Nannetti: To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been drawn to the Fourth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Post Office Vote in which the Committee stated with reference to the Corcoran defalcations that the Committee were not satisfied from the evidence before them that the fine of £10 was adequate to the occasion; and, if so, whether, considering the punishment meted out to subordinate officers, he intends to take any steps in view of this Report."

Cork Telegraph Staff.

Captain DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for Cork I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the case of the male telegraph learners in the Cork Office who have recently qualified, and who are still on half pay; and, if so, will he explain why these qualified officers are compelled to perform two hours work per day in the sorting office without remuneration on the ground of learning their duties.

Lord STANLEY: I have made inquiry, as I promised the hon. Member, and I find that two male learners, who qualified recently for appointment, but for whom there are at present no full time duties on which they can be employed, have given two hours additional attendance in the sorting office for the purpose of enabling them to maintain their efficiency in postal work. They continue to rank as learners, but if an opportunity occurs for giving them full-time employment, their cases will not be lost sight of. A revision of the staff is now under consideration.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: May I ask the Secretary of State for War when the Army Estimates will be in the hands of hon. Members? I see that they, like the Report of the Reconstitution Committee, have been handed to the Press first.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That is a matter, I think, for which I am responsible. I understood that hon. Members were most desirous to see the figures of the Army Estimates before the discussion took place on the Navy Estimates. I therefore took care that the Memorandum should be circulated, and I believe it is at this moment in the Vote Office. The Army Estimates themselves will not be circulated until to-morrow. For the convenience of hon. Members I did endeavour on Saturday night to have the Memorandum circulated, and if it was not in the hands of hon. Members this morning that matter I regret. If the exigencies of printing did not allow hon. Members to receive it before mid-day to-day I regret it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The point is that if it is not possible to place these documents in the hands of Members they ought not to be given to the Press.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I admit that as a general procedure; but this is a particular case, because I understood that it was thought desirable that this locument should be in the hands of on. Members to-day before they discussed the Navy Estimates. I have done my very best to secure its circulation to-day. If Government printing goes a little less rapidly than other printing that is a matter for which I am not responsible. I did my best to secure the circulation of the Papers to-day.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: How did it get to the Press?

*__MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER__: This occurred on Saturday, and the Press have facilities for printing on Saturday and Sunday which the Government do not possess. There has been no unusual course taken. The course taken has been, I believe, for the convenience of Members.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Press could not bring it out until they got it.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: If I may use a printing phrase, the copy went to both printers at the same time. There is no doubt about that.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Now I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the order of business will be this week.

*__MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS__: We propose to take the Navy Estimates to-day, to-morrow, and Wednesday, and the Army Estimates on Thursday moving the Speaker out of the Chair.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Seeing that the Army Estimates will not be in the hands of hon. Members till to-morrow, is it not scanty time to allow till only Thursday for hon. Members to consider them?

*__MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS__: If the right hon. Gentleman will repeat the Question to-morrow the matter shall be considered meantime.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of supplying Blue-books and other State Papers to hon. Members and to the Press simultaneously.

*__MR. SPEAKER__: Order, Order! The hon. Member had better put that Question down. It is now three o'clock, and the matter is not one of an urgent character.

EDITING QUESTIONS.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal S.) asked permission to call Mr. Speaker's attention to a matter regarding the practice of the House which affected every Member on either side. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that that very day a Question down in the name of his hon. friend the Member for the College Green Division of Dublin was not put because his hon. friend complained that crucial words had been eliminated without any reason having been given to his hon. friend by the clerks at the Table. His hon. friend had told him that he received no communication whatever from the clerks at the Table about the elimination, of which he certainly ought to have had notice. He did not wish to show any personal disrespect to the learned gentlemen at the Table, but he desired it to be perfectly understood that Questions were not to be edited by the clerks except with the permission of Mr. Speaker.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to make a speech. He is not asking my ruling; he is giving his own ruling.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said he was endeavouring to give Mr. Speaker's ruling in his own words. Perhaps he was putting it too enthusiastically. But he would put himself in order by asking a Question. He wished to know whether the clerks at the Table had any right to alter a Question without Mr. Speaker's permission, and whether if they did alter a Question, it was not their duty to ask the hon. Member putting the Question whether he approved of the alteration. In this particular case the fact that the words omitted were crucial words was proved by their insertion in the typewritten answer which had been supplied.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that when any substantial alteration was thought necessary it was the duty of the clerks to communicate with the hon. Member putting the Question, and they always endeavoured to do so. It was often very difficult to communicate with an hon. Member about his Question, but he was told that this Question had been in print for some days in the form in which it now stood on the Paper, and if the words left out were so crucial he should have thought the hon. Member for College Green would have called attention to it before. He assured the hon. Member that there was no attempt on the part of the clerks at the Table to assume any undue authority.

*Mr. NANNETTI, as a matter of personal explanation, said another Question of his received similar treatment the week before, and was rendered ridiculous by having the very kernel taken out of it. In declining to put the Question under discussion he did not intend to be either rude or discourteous to the House, but as a protest against the way in which his Questions had been frequently treated at the clerks' Table.

NEW BILLS.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Married Women's Property Act, 1882," presented by Mr. Kimber; supported by Sir George Bartley, Mr. Eugene Wason, and Mr. Lowe; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 100.]

PHARMACY BILL.

"To provide for the further regulation of the sale of poisons, and the compounding of medical prescriptions, and to amend the Pharmacy Acts, 1852, and 1868," presented by Mr. Lough; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 101.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS AND ELECTIONS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and registration of Parliamentary Voters and to Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes in relation thereto," presented by Mr. John Sinclair; supported by Mr. Ashton, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Kearley, and Mr. Ure; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th July, and to be printed. [Bill 102.]

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that, on a point of order, he wished to ask whether they could have the business taken in the order in which it was printed on the Paper, and whether hon. Members who had obtained a place in the ballot might not go on with their Motions before the Secretary to the Admiralty made his statement?

*MR. SPEAKER said there was no point of order. The hon. Member in charge of the Order of the Day was about to move that he leave the Chair, and if the hon. Member wished to preface that with certain observations it was not in his power to prevent him. That practice had of late years been frequently followed both with the Navy and Army Estimates.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said that in moving that the Speaker do now leave the Chair it would be for the convenience of the House if he made a general statement on the Navy Estimates. He felt that in continuing this practice, which had been followed for years, he was under considerable disability. His qualifications were very greatly less than those of the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who had preceded him in this task, and therefore he asked the indulgence of the House in laying before them those matters which it was now his duty to do. Before entering on his statement, however, he believed he was only expressing what was the general feeling of all Members on both sides of the House in saying how very much they should miss from these debates the late Sir William Allan, who always took a prominent part in discussions on the Navy. Though they might not always agree with all the opinions he expressed, they were assured both at the Admiralty and in the House that he was a true friend of the Navy, had its welfare at heart, and never approached naval subjects in any Party spirit. The feature of the Estimates on which the House would concentrate attention most closely was their magnitude. It was his duty, firstly, to explain, as far as he could, where these large increases arose, and secondly to justify them. Those who had studied the figures must have noticed that more than half the total increase arose on Votes 8 and 9—especially Vote 8, which was the Construction Vote. In previous discussions on these Estimates the hon. Member for Dundee more than once expressed the opinion, with which he fully concurred, that Vote 8 was the key to all; that if that Vote was large, there would be a corresponding increase in all the other Votes. The hon. Member, however, had also applied a standard which he wished to correct. The hon. Member said that Vote 8 would approximately amount to one-third of the total; but that standard was not applicable to-day, for Vote 8 was more nearly one-half than one-third of the total and it would not be a true deduction that because Vote 8 amounted to £18,000,000 this year, the Navy would cost three times that amount at some future date. All gun mountings which were not transferable were charged to Vote 8 and not to Vote 9, and as advances took place in scientific construction, they would be constantly adding to the mountings which were part of the ship and decreasing those which formed part of the gun. Then stores, coal and the increased cost of the ships themselves were charged to Vote 8. That meant that the increase in the cost of *matériel* was out of proportion to the other Votes. A proportion of the increase in the Vote was due to the purchase of the two Chilian battleships and to providing the ammunition for them. The remaining Votes he would shortly summarise to the House to show that there were increases common to them all, automatic increases due to the increase in the size of the fleet. On Vote 1, there was an addition of 4,000 men, but beyond that there was an increase of pay to the Royal Marines, which was necessary in consequence of the increase of pay which the Army were to receive from the 1st April next. On Vote 2, there was an increase in the total cost of victualling, due to the increase in the number of men and to the decision to grant to the Royal Marines from 1st April free rations when they were ashore, which they had not received before. The increase on Vote 3, medical establishments and services, was partly automatic, as it was calculated in direct proportion to the number of men in the fleet, but there was also an increase due to the opening of the new Naval Hospital at Chatham. A considerable increase on the Education Vote was due to the opening of the new Cadet Establishment at Osborne, and the Vote for the Royal Naval Reserves was largely increased in order to provide for additional numbers for the Reserves. The increase of Vote 9, apart from the charge which fell upon it for the Chilian ships, was due chiefly to the cost of the new cordite, which cost 1s. 10d. per lb. on an average as compared with 1s. 5d., the price of the old cordite, while a larger quantity of the new cordite was required for each individual charge than was the case with the cordite now in use. Vote 10 would be dealt with by the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, but it would be noticed that the increase there was due to the larger annuity under the Loan Act. The Admiralty Vote showed an increase of £21,000, but he did not think that the total of that Vote could be considered unduly large, as it was less than 1 per cent. of the whole sum which the Admiralty had to administer.

He would now like to say something as to the justification for these enormous Estimates. The country had decided to adopt what was known as the "two-Power standard" in its naval policy; and this, in the view of the Admiralty, meant that this country should be able to engage in a naval war with reasonable probability of emerging victorious from a contest with any other two naval Powers. This principle must be broadly applied, not solely to particular units or particular ships. So far as it was applicable to ships, he would quote the words used by the First Lord of the Admiralty, at Glasgow, in April last—

> "The standard applies only to battleships, because in the matter of cruisers there can be no question of equality."

The standard could only apply to battleships; and though the desired preponderance could not be distinctly expressed in units, so far as it could be it was expressed in the number of battleships that could be put in line of battle against the fleets of any two other Powers. It might be said that the standard was too high, or too low, and criticisms had been offered from both points of view. It had been freely stated that the Admiralty had ignored the battleship programme of other Powers; that in making their calculations the Admiralty had not taken account of the ships laid down by Russia. The Admiralty were fully aware of what Russia was doing and well informed as to the Russian battleships programme, and the naval strength of this and other friendly Powers had entered into the calculation. There were three friendly Powers in Europe who were the principal maritime and naval Powers—France, Russia, and Germany. Taking the first two combined, the total number of battleships, first and second class, built and building, was sixty-four. The total of French and German battleships, built and building, first and second class, was sixty-one. The total of battleships in the Navy of Great Britain, first and second class, built and building, was sixty-three, so that we were very close to the mark. This country was well up to the standard and not unduly beyond it.

Mr. RITCHIE (Croydon) asked if the hon. Gentleman would state the tonnage.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he had not the figures at hand; he could give them, but did not think this was a matter of supreme importance. In considering the question of cruisers, the Admiralty were not governed solely by the two-Power standard. The duty of a cruiser was not to fight in line of battle, but to protect our trade, our commerce, and our mercantile marine; and therefore it would be seen that the standard of strength to which they had to build was not a comparative one; it was a question of proportion to be considered in relation to the magnitude of the interests to be protected. The sea-borne trade of the Empire represented £1,200,000,000, and that was a figure that spoke for itself. The Navy was not the Navy of this country but the Navy of the Empire. The importation into this country of food and raw material in 1902, was represented by £379,000,000; the tonnage for that year he had not got, but it was larger than in 1901, when it was 34,000,000 tons. Daily there were 93,000 tons of food and raw material brought into this country under the protection of our Navy. The total tonnage of the mercantile marine of the Empire was 16,000,000; the total mercantile tonnage of the rest of the world was 17,500,000, and as 1,500,000 of that was on the great lakes of America, the total sea-going tonnage of the Empire was as great as that of the rest of the world. It was clear, therefore, that having these immense, these vital interests to protect, the Admiralty could not estimate the necessity for cruisers by the standard applicable to any other two Powers. Lord Rosebery, speaking not long ago in Scotland, said, "The world is our granary." Yes, and if the world was our granary the British Navy held the key of that granary, and long it would be before any responsible Government would propose, or Parliament sanction, the surrender of that key. Much had been heard of late of the enormous value of the invisible exports of the country. In that expression was included the earnings of our mercantile marine, and these were absolutely dependent on the maintenance of the open sea by our cruisers. In the published statement of the First Lord there was a reference to the Intelligence Department, and it was one of the duties of this Department to consider the complications of these trade matters and advise the Admiralty, after scientific research, as to the cruiser strength necessary. It was no haphazard estimate; it was arrived at by scientific and expert examination. He could not lay before the House the steps by which the calculation was made, but the House would accept it from him that the Estimates laid before the House, the heavy demands made upon the country, were the result of careful and scientific consideration.

MR. LOUGH asked what was the standard by which this was arrived at.

*MR. PRETYMAN said the basis—using that as a better word than standard—was to be found in the figures he had given, and he was sure the House would appreciate his meaning. Smaller vessels followed in proportion, and increase in other Votes was automatic. On these broad grounds, and with a full sense of their responsibility, the Admiralty presented Estimates containing these enormous figures. Repeating what had been said by his predecessor, he could assure the House the Admiralty in no way gloried in the size of the Estimates. The Admiralty much regretted to have to ask the country to make these great sacrifices, but if we were in the position of having to import this immense mass of raw material and food, on which the very existence of our people depended, this expenditure must be considered as an insurance and a set-off against the cheapness of the commodities we obtain.

Upon other matters he was absolved from entering at great length, because the statements in the Estimates and the statement of the First Lord were exhaustive and practically gave all the information necessary. One or two points, however, he would refer to, and first to the *personnel*. It would be satisfactory to the House to know that steps had been taken to increase the Reserves, because this bore very much on the question of economy. It was clear that, a certain number of men being required to man the Fleet when it was mobilised for war, it must be more economical that a certain proportion should be Reserve men, and not that all should be active service men, with the consequent heavy expenditure. That subject was carefully examined by a very able Committee, presided over by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick, and the whole of the steps which had been taken to increase the Reserves had been taken on the recommendation of that Committee whose Report had been laid before the House. No important criticisms had been made of that Report on the platform or in the Press, and therefore it might be taken to have been accepted by the country. One of the most important recommendations was the extension of the non-continuous service system, and he might state that the total of 1,000 non-continuous seamen and stokers, which was the number to be taken in any one year, would be reached by the end of this year. The entries were very satisfactory and were well reported on, and there was every reason to believe that the anticipations of the Admiralty on that point would be justified. Then there was the Royal Fleet Reserve which consisted of active service ratings who were pensioners or had retired from the service and joined the Royal Fleet Reserve. That was a most important Reserve, and the numbers upon the whole were extremely satisfactory. The total number of the Fleet Reserve was 8,548 men, a considerable increase on the total of last year. The Royal Naval Reserve was also a very important item, and by the Naval Forces Act of last session the limit of 30,000 men, which used to be the limit of that Reserve, was removed. In the coming year it was proposed to increase it by fifty executive officers, 180 warrant engineers, and 3,600 men; and also twenty-five officers for the Australian Reserve. The condition of that Reserve was satisfactory, the numbers showing an increase. An important feature of the Royal Naval Reserve was the institution of a corps of Royal Naval Reserve in Newfoundland. Under the Act of last year the force in Newfoundland was authorised and arrangements had been made by which the Newfoundland Government made an annual payment of £3,000 for the 600 men who were to be enrolled. On 31st December last there were 398 enrolled, whose progress under training was reported to be very satisfactory and whose standard of physique was very high. There was one other important section of the Reserve forces—the Naval Volunteers. They were raised under the Act of last session, organised under local divisions, and sub-divided into companies. Each division was now commanded by a commander, instead of a lieutenant. Up to the present, 2,000 men had been enrolled and two divisions had been formed—one in London, and one on the Clyde—and negotiations were in progress for the formation of divisions in other places on the south and east coasts, and at Liverpool. A drill ship was now being fitted in Sheerness for the London division.

He would like to say a word before departing from the subject of *personnel* about the most important question of training of men and officers. The first thing he would refer to was the new establishment at Osborne. Last September the building was occupied by eighty naval cadets, within nine months of the original decision of the Board to establish the new system of training. That decision was not come to by the Admiralty without being criticised from one or two points of view, by the hon. Member for Dundee and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University. The method of selection undoubtedly presented considerable difficulties. Hitherto the method of selection of the cadets for the Britannia had been taken at an intermediate age. There were two periods in the career of the average English boy, one when he passed from the preparatory into the secondary school, and one when he passed from the secondary school to the University. It was thought that by taking boys at the age of fifteen, the Admiralty would have the advantage of the boys having received a public school education; but it was found that they did not derive that advantage, and that the real alternative lay between taking the boys at twelve to thirteen, or at seventeen to eighteen, and it was decided, after careful consideration, that the younger age was the better, because the Admiralty would be able to combine a good secondary school education together with that particular training in a naval atmosphere which had been so advantageous in the past. Then the question arose as to competitive examination, and it was held to be cruel to subject these young lads to such an examination. The alternative decided upon was nomination, but nomination surrounded by the greatest safeguards. The system that had been adopted had already been explained to the House, and in the last few days a statement had been circulated showing exactly the way in which the selection for these nominations had been carried out. He thought that the reports of the Interview Committee threw a favourable light on the system, and that hon. Members would agree that it was working out extremely satisfactorily. One boy showed great judgment in an answer given before the Interview Committee. He was asked, "Who were the three greatest admirals?" and he answered, "Nelson, Blake, and Lord Selborne." That the parents of the boys were well satisfied might be gathered from the remark that had been made to him by a lady who had a boy at Osborne. She said, "Our boy is so happy there. He tells us he has cream with his porridge." That showed they did not starve the boys. The establishment at Osborne was provided with a sea-going vessel, in which boys were taken to sea and given instruction, and everything was provided in order to combine the best secondary education, as given in a public school, with that practical instruction so necessary for the education of a naval cadet. He wished strongly to emphasise the desire of the Admiralty that in the selection of these boys no advantage should be given to any boys who had been crammed for any form of examination. The Board of Admiralty desired that the examination should be assimilated as nearly as possible in every particular to the ordinary examination which a boy of twelve or thirteen would have to pass in order to enter a public school. He thought the House would agree that it was in no way necessary to specialise the examination of a boy before that age. It was not intended or desired that any form of specialisation should begin until after the boy had gone to Osborne, and the course of the examination would constantly be directed rather to placing at a disadvantage boys who had been specially crammed for it.

As to the general training of the men, there had been recently a very great change, which the House had fully approved, in the method of training the men of the Fleet. Up to a year ago the whole of the men of the Fleet were trained as seamen in masts and yards, and gunnery and the work in the engine-room and stokehold were treated as specialities. As the necessity for increased knowledge of gunnery, care of machinery, and stokehold duties among all the men of the Fleet was forced upon the Admiralty, it became clear that the gunnery school, the torpedo school, and the various schools in which instruction was given would have to provide accommodation for the whole of the men of the Fleet. Under the new system, instead of these schools being overcrowded, it had been realised that the necessary training for every man of the Fleet was training in gunnery, in stokehold duties, and in care of machinery, from the earliest age at which a boy entered the service on board the training ships. That had become the normal training of every man of the Fleet instead of the training in masts and yards. In addition to that, in order that they might not lose the activity and nerve which were necessary for every seaman, a course of physical instruction and gymnastics was included. The result had been that the schools of special instruction had again become, as they were originally intended to be, schools for the instruction of those who showed special aptitude for the particular work which the schools were intended to teach; overcrowdng was avoided, and the only ratings who were sent to these schools were those who were able to derive considerable profit to themselves and to the service from the instruction which they obtained.

The House had frequently expressed its interest in the question of the shooting of the Fleet, and the Admiralty had been pressed to issue a Return giving the exact particulars of the shooting of each gun in each ship. The Admiralty desired to place at the disposal of the House all the information that it was possible to give on this subject, but he thought the House would see that they could not place at the disposal of other countries information which was extremely important to them, and which we were not able to obtain from them. But a Return would be issued which would show, not the exact shooting of every gun of every ship, but the relative value of the shooting of every ship and of every series of guns in a ship. The Return would also give the names of the men who had specially distinguished themselves. He thought the House would accept the principle that the prize-firing was by no means everything. What the Admiralty desired was that the men should learn to shoot in peace time at ranges and in conditions probable in war. They wished to avoid an artificial system of practice at ranges not likely to occur in war. He was able, from Returns which had reached the Admiralty, to report that the firing practice during the past year had been a great improvement upon past years. There had been some exceptional shooting. The "Leviathan," he thought, had a record which could hardly be beaten. Steaming at twelve knots and firing ten rounds from a 9·2 gun in three minutes, she obtained ten hits upon a target fifteen feet by twenty feet, at a range of from 1,400 to 2,000 yards. The firing of the twelve-inch guns in the Channel Fleet was also exceptionally good. By the provision of the necessary appliances the Admiralty had done their best to enable the gunners to exercise their skill. They had recently provided every important ship of the Fleet with new six-power telescopes, which was double the power of the telescopes formerly in use. These new telescopes for the China Fleet were now on their way.

There had been a good deal of discussion lately on the question of sights, and he thought it would be proper for him to say that it was a misapprehension to suppose that if they had the range accurately, if they had the cross wires of the sight upon the object, and if the sight of the gun was properly laid, the shot was bound to hit the mark. That was not the case. There were many factors which upset these calculations, such as the temperature, the exact character of the cordite, and the number of shots which had been fired from the gun. A gun had a life of so many shots, and the firing of each shot involved a certain loss in the velocity of the next shot that was fired. It was out of the power of any gunner or mechanician to deal with these factors, and if, at a range of 4,000 yards, these factors worked in the same direction they were capable of making a difference of 300 yards in the fall of the shot. That was an important point, because it showed that the actual adjustment of the sight to the situation of the moment was a matter of the greatest importance, and that what was required in the sight was that it should be accurately adjusted to the gun, and that it should be quickly and easily adjustable by those who were using the gun.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked, on the question of training, whether the "Northampton" class of boys, who were taken at the age of eighteen or nineteen, was being continued.

***Mr. PRETYMAN** said that class was being continued and he believed it was satisfactory. The next question was that of the victualling of the Fleet. The new rations which had been sanctioned had been in force in the training ships for twelve months. They had been found extremely satisfactory and had been much appreciated. The new rations consisted of coffee, condensed milk, jam, preserved vegetables, and a larger amount of preserved meat. The new rations had been in force in the Fleet for five months, and though there was no doubt that they were considerably appreciated, he could not say that they had been taken up to the extent that had been hoped and expected. Apparently many of the men regarded the new rations as an admirable means of increasing their savings, because they allowed a considerable quantity of the rations to lapse, took up the money, and purchased what they required from the canteen. The coffee, however, had been well taken up and was very much appreciated. The question was likely to be asked whether something might not be done to provide the men of the Fleet with soft bread instead of biscuits. The Admiralty had taken up that matter and a start was being made. They had ordered two sets of plant for making and baking bread and installed them in the "King Edward VII." and the "Suffolk." In the Estimates for 1904–5 money was taken for the purchase of ten additional sets of plant, which would be installed in four battleships of the "King Edward VII." class and six cruisers of the "Devonshire" class. If the experiment was successful no doubt the system would be extended. There certainly had been some complaints in the Fleet of the quality of the cooking on board the ships. That was a difficult question. The Admiralty did not wish to increase the number of non-combatants on board ship, but they were desirous of doing everything they could to give instruction in cookery. There were now three schools of cookery, one at each of the three home ports; up to recently there was only one at Portsmouth. Then there was the point raised by the hon. Member for Devonport last year, namely, the question of manufacture at the victualling yards which had been carefully considered, and it had been decided to cease the manufacture of oatmeal, flour and suet. The manufacture of biscuits and chocolate would be continued.

He now came to the progress of construction voted. The policy and the progress of construction and reconstruction were so very fully stated and the names of the ships affected were given in such detail in the statement of the

First Lord, that he would only be wearying the House if he repeated the facts set forth there; but he might recall the fact that the total of new construction for the year 1904–5 amounted to the unprecedented sum of £11,500,000, but out of that £948,000 was for the "Triumph" and "Swiftsure," the two ships purchased from the Chilian Government. The point to which attention was directed by the Supplementary Estimate presented to the House a few days ago was the large expenditure on contract repairs and reconstruction. He then stated that those repairs were not progressive, but, on the contrary, that they were special, and that he hoped to be able to announce a considerable reduction in the amount devoted to them in this year's Estimates. He was glad that he could make that good, because, whereas £1,200,000 was devoted to reconstruction and repair in the Estimates of the present year, the Estimates now presented only contained a sum of £600,000, a reduction of 50 per cent. The fact was that they had got rather behindhand in their work of reconstruction and repairs owing to the congestion in the dockyards, and the object of sending these ships to the contract yards was to make up leeway. The effect had been that recently the Comptroller of the Navy had stated to the Board of Admiralty that the whole of the ships which would be mobilised in case of necessity either were actually ready for commission at this moment, or, if they were being reconstructed or repaired, could be ready in a few weeks. That, he thought, was a very satisfactory statement.

Then came the subject of the three new battleships laid down in the dockyards during the past six weeks, which were of the "King Edward VII." type. In the statement made by his right hon. friend the late Secretary to the Admiralty last year, he held out the expectation that these ships would be of a new type. It had been intended that these ships should be put out to contract at a somewhat later date; but it happened that the work in the dockyards had been so advanced that it was necessary either to discharge some of the particular men who were employed on new construction work in the yards, or lay down the new ships there. It was therefore decided to lay these vessels down in the dockyards. Certainly it had been hoped at the time his right hon. friend made his statement that the new design would be ready by that period; but the new design had worked out to a considerably larger displacement than the Board had anticipated, and it was necessary, therefore, entirely to re-arrange the design and obtain a smaller displacement at a smaller cost. That would have involved such a delay that it was thought better to lay down these three ships of the "King Edward VII." type, which, after all, was as good a type of battleship as existed at the present moment. He thought the House would realise that it was not very much out of date when he said that the two new battleships ordered by the Japanese Government to be laid down in the last few days were practically of the "King Edward VII." type. It was therefore not an out-of-date type; but at the same time the Board of Admiralty would have been glad if they could have fulfilled the expectation held out last year and laid them down after a newer type. The two new battleships, however, which would be laid down in the autumn of this year would be of the new type known as the "Lord Nelson" type.

Criticism might perhaps be directed against the Admiralty to the effect that they were not building sufficient submarines; but he would remind the House that the submarine was still largely in the experimental stage, and he remembered well that in the debate on the Estimates two years ago the hon. Member for Dundee criticised the Admiralty very severely for building submarines too quickly. He would remind the House that these vessels could be built very quickly, and therefore it was not desirable to build too many at once of the same type, as improvements were daily being evolved, and they could hardly tell from week to week whether the existing type might not be to some extent superseded.

Arising out of the question of construction, he might say a few words on the dockyards. In these Estimates there was a new sub-head to Vote 8 which would provide, for two years only, a sum of £200,000—£100,000 in the coming year, and another £100,000 in 1905–6—

for the replacement of obsolete machinery for the dockyards. It was hoped that when that sum had been spent it would suffice to equip the yards with the most modern machinery and enable them to obtain better value from their output and the labour bestowed upon them. Good progress was being made with the installation of the system of electricity in the yards, for which the House voted large sums last year under the Naval Works Act. In the matter of labour in the dockyards questions of pay and salary had recently been raised in the House. Several improvements had been made in the pay and allowances given to dockyard labourers, and the establishment had been increased from a little over 6,000 to 7,000 men. An experiment on a small scale was just about to be tried which it was hoped might have far-reaching effects. The system was going to be inaugurated in the engineering shops of what was known as the premium system, by which a particular time would be allowed—that time having been carefully calculated beforehand by practical observation—within which any particular work could be carried out by the man engaged upon it, If he completed that work satisfactorily, and it passed inspection, within less than the allotted average time, he would then receive a premium calculated proportionately to the amount of time he had saved. That system had already been adopted in one or two large private yards. It was found to work very satisfactorily, and it was hoped that it would work equally satisfactorily in the dockyards. If so, it would certainly be extended.

He had, in conclusion, again to assure the House how deeply the Admiralty felt the responsibility which lay upon them in presenting these immense Estimates. It was suggested by a Motion which was upon the Paper that they were unnecessary, because it would be within the power of the Government and the country to make an arrangement with foreign Powers by whom our standard was set, in order to reduce the amount of naval expenditure in this and other countries. It was not, perhaps, for him to discuss that question at any length, but he might remind the House that the naval policy of this country was purely defensive. The strategy of the British Navy was purely offensive, but the naval policy of the country was purely defensive. That policy being defensive it followed that it was not we who took the lead, but that we followed other Powers and did not initiate expenditure. It had also been stated in that House on several occasions that the only overture of this character which had been made was made at that Table by Lord Goschen when he was First Lord of the Admiralty, and what he said and what arose out of it would be within the recollection of hon. Members. One more source of heavy expenditure to which he would like to refer, was the fact of the very large number of ships we were obliged to put in commission. If there was one lesson which we might learn from recent events in the Far East, it was the rapidity with which a naval blow might be struck at the commencement of a war, and it was evident, if we learnt that lesson, that the Navy which was most prepared for war would be the Navy which would get the enormous advantage of the initiative. It would be clear to the House that even if we had sufficient active service ratings in naval barracks, in the training establishments and in the coastguard, wherever they might be, fully instructed and competent in their duties, and if we had the ships in reserve ready for those men, those ships would be by no means so efficient as if they had entered on the war with their crews ready on board and thoroughly accustomed to the ships. The proof of that was to be found in what happened at manœuvres. The troubles which arose—the breaksdown of machinery and mechanism—occurred almost invariably in ships specially commissioned with active service ratings to take part in the manœuvres. Comparatively few breaksdown and difficulties occurred with ships which had been in commission, and which took part in manœuvres with crews that were accustomed to everything on board. The advantages of the immediate stroke in the case of a navy differed enormously from that in the case of an army. An army could not strike as a navy could strike immediately, and many preparations were necessary before an army could be brought into operation. Therefore, if we were to have the full advantage of the initiative in the case of the Navy it was necessary not only to have the Fleet calculated on the standard he had ventured to suggest and elaborate to the House; but that Fleet, and especially the best ships—because it was the best ships which should be sent into action first—must be kept mainly in commission and ready to strike a blow immediately the necessity arose. He would venture to say before sitting down that although the British Navy was the greatest, and, perhaps, the most powerful engine of war in the world, at the same time it certainly was the opinion of the Admiralty, this House, and the country, and, he believed, of the world, that there was no greater power for the maintenance of peace throughout the whole universe than the British Navy. To that end it should be directed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he did not propose at that moment to follow the hon. Gentleman into the long and interesting statement just made to the House, but he thought they should be wanting in courtesy, if they did not at once acknowledge the care which the hon. Gentleman had taken in making his statement and the perfect clearness with which he had laid the proposals of the Government before the House. The proper time for discussing the proposals would be when the House got into Committee, and he had a further reason for postponing what he had to say in the fact that his hon. friend the Member for West Denbighshire had a proposition to make to the House which was of the greatest possible importance. He should not stand in the way of the House discussing it at once. He would content himself now with the almost formal duty he had performed. He saw the acting Leader of the House in his place, and perhaps he might be permitted to say that the true answer to his hon. friend's proposition was one that must come not from the Admiralty but from the representative of the Government.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said he joined his hon. friend in congratulating the Secretary to the Admiralty on the statement he had made. He thought it would be for the general convenience of the House if they immediately proceeded to discuss the definite issue which was raised in the Motion he desired to submit. At a later stage the House would have full opportunity of discussing the many interesting and important points in the Votes *seriatim*, but, undoubtedly, the first point they had to consider was the magnitude of the Estimates, and that was the kernel of his Resolution. The object of his Motion in the first place was to call attention to the constant increase that was going on in the Naval Estimates; in the second place, to call attention to what was patent to all, that those large increases must, if they were persisted in, have a retarding effect on the industrial system of the country; and, in the third place, to suggest that the time had arrived when they should urge the Government of this country to make every effort possible in order to come to some arrangement with other great naval Powers, which would lead to a diminution in the future shipbuilding programmes of the various countries concerned. He thought the House knew sufficient of his views in regard to the Navy to know that he was one of those who believed that an adequate and efficient Navy was absolutely necessary under existing conditions for the safety of our Empire. It was our principal arm of defence, it was the main protector of our vast commerce, and he submitted that the necessity of maintaining a thoroughly efficient Navy for our purposes was not in any way inconsistent with an earnest desire to urge the Government to make every possible effort by which a diminution might take place in those huge sums which were a burden on our national resources. If they were able happily to achieve any such result, as the outcome of his Motion, it would be a great benefit for all concerned. It would strengthen the better elements in the national life. It would transfer capital from the engines of war to remunerative work, it would vivify commerce, and it would make for international peace. It was quite evident from the speech of the Secretary to the Admiralty, and it was equally evident from the Statement issued by the First Lord of the Admiralty in connection with the Estimates this year, that the Board of Admiralty were fully conscious of the gigantic dimensions of the Estimates. The statement of the First Lord contained the following passage—

> "The Board of Admiralty are well aware that the charge they are asking Parliament to sanction is a heavy one, but Parliament must remember how heavy is the responsibility cast by it on the Board, of providing the country with a Navy strong enough to sustain a struggle with the Navies of any two Powers, and also strong enough to ensure reasonable security to its vast sea-borne trade and to the food supply of the people. The Board ask for nothing which they do not believe to be necessary for this purpose. They have avoided, and will avoid, giving any stimulus to the expansion of armaments by the formulation of large programmes of construction, but when such programmes are adopted by other Powers, they have no choice but to take them into account in framing their own shipbuilding policy."

From a practical standpoint it seemed to him that that passage was in itself a justification of the Motion he made. It was an admission on the part of the Board of Admiralty that, so long as things remained as they were now, the Board had no choice in the matter but to go on increasing the programme year by year in order to keep pace with the shipbuilding programmes of other naval Powers. He was one of those who did not challenge the necessity of the two-Power standard. He thought that under existing circumstances it was necessary, but he would point out that it was rather an elastic phrase, capable of a considerable amount of variation. One prejudicial result which had followed the adoption of that standard as the guiding principle of our policy in regard to the programme of shipbuilding, was that it had been the means of discontinuing, to a large extent, the legitimate criticism by the House of Commons of the Navy Estimates. In regard to the past history of this proposal there had been a great deal too much fatalism on the one hand in the mind of the Board of Admiralty, and on the other hand a good deal too much vague enthusiasm on the part of those who were genuinely anxious to reduce armaments. He did not think the present moment was an opportune time for peace Conferences, but he did think it was a favourable time, at all events, for a practical interchange of views between our Government and the Governments of other great naval Powers. That interchange of views should take place and be carried on by the business men of the Cabinet. As we held a predominant position among the Navies of the world he thought it was our plain duty to take the initiative in the matter.

It was admitted on all hands that the two-Power standard had been proved to be sufficient. In the interesting speech which he made on Friday last Lord Brassey emphasised the correctness of that view when he stated that in relation to battleships our strength had been brought fully up to the two-Power standard, with a large margin; while in regard to cruisers we had a still more marked superiority. The hon. Gentleman opposite laid down the proposition that that standard could not be made to apply to cruisers. In regard to the general principle the hon. Gentleman laid before the House he was inclined to believe it, but he thought a distinction might be drawn between first-class cruisers and other cruisers. Lord Brassey in the same speech stated that if the expenditure on shipbuilding had been justified the expenditure on manning had certainly been increased beyond the necessity of the case. He further said that he had done his best to promote the efficiency of the Navy, but he had striven, and would continue to strive, to combine economy and efficiency. It seemed to him in regard to that point made by Lord Brassey, that, under existing conditions, with the two-Power standard in full force, it was almost impossible for us today to combine full efficiency and full economy in our Navy. He did not wish to press the point too far. It seemed to him that, so long as the Board of Admiralty acted in accordance with the view that they should keep pace with all the developments that suddenly took place in the shipbuilding programmes of other countries, there must be a certain amount of waste of public money in carrying out such a policy. He thought it was admitted on all hands that we were in a position in which we could fairly, without our action being misconstrued, approach the other naval Powers concerned. It might be said that although that might be so now, it might not be so three or four years hence. He had been interested to see an estimate in the German Naval Annual of what the relative strength of the Great Naval Powers of Europe would be in 1907. Dealing only with battleships, in that year Great Britain would have a tonnage of 749,000 tons, France 340,000 tons, Russia 300,000 tons; the United States 260,000 tons, and Germany 213,000 tons. In other words we should be within 100,000 tons, three years hence, of the combined aggregate tonnage of France, Russia, and Germany. The same superiority, and more, would be maintained in regard to cruisers and torpedo boats. He mentioned these figures to show that even looking three or four years ahead we would be fully justified in approaching the other great naval Powers on the two-Power standard.

But turning to the other side of the question, what did these huge annual charges for our Navy mean to the people of this country who paid the taxes? He would only take a few figures relative to the last thirty years. In 1870 we spent on our Navy £9,420,000; in 1880 £10,000,000; in 1890 £15,000,000; in 1900 £26,000,000, and in 1904–5 we were going to spend £37,000,000. These, figures were alarming; but a still more serious question was raised if these figures were examined in relation to the taxable capacity of the country. They meant that in 1870 the expenditure on the Navy was at the rate of 5s. 10d. per head of the population; in 1880, 5s. 9d.; in 1890, 8s.; in 1900, 12s. 5d.; and to-day it was 17s. 8d. per head—man, woman and child. Put in another way the expenditure on the Navy was four times as much to-day as it was thirty years ago, and three times as much calculated at per head of the population. An hon. friend on the other side of the House might remind him that the wealth of the country had increased by 30 per cent. during the last thirty years; but his reply to that argument was that the weight of the burden of taxation on account of the Navy had increased by no less than 300 per cent. These were facts and figures which ought to receive the immediate attention of the House. Of course the Admiralty had a defence for this huge expenditure. The First Lord of the Admiralty on Friday night last said—

> "The Navy Estimates are very heavy. What does that mean? What is their justification? It is by the Navy, with the assistance of the Army, that you hold these markets I have mentioned; that you hold the whole British Empire, and the rights of trade in China and countries like that. Why have you no anxiety about the continuance of your trade—cotton, woollen, iron, and all the many other manufactures? It is because their path on the great waters is rendered sure and certain by the work of the Navy."

He thought there would be some difficulty in harmonising these views and those of his hon. friend opposite. He himself did not deny these facts, but maintained that a point must be reached some time, if we proceeded much further with this increased expenditure, when the drain on our national resources would seriously affect our industrial system. If his Motion were carried it would not in any way affect the paramount position of Great Britain as the great naval Power of the world. Who could doubt, in this matter of the defence of the Empire, that the stability of the nation and the Empire did not altogether depend on our strength of armaments, but that a good deal of the vitalising power behind our industrial enterprise and progress sprang from a buoyant Exchequer and an industrious people? If our resources were buoyant in time of peace the better would we be able to bear the strain of a time of war if that time unhappily arrived.

He wished to say one word as to the possibility and advisability of taking some such step as was suggested by his Resolution. He knew there were immense difficulties in the way; he admitted that we had not yet reached the millenium. But were those difficulties insurmountable? He did not believe that; and even if they were insurmountable that would not absolve us from the duty of attempting to carry this programme out. There were one or two favourable elements in the present situation. First of all, there was what was going on in the great struggle between two great Powers in the Far East. Lord Selborne referred in his speech on Friday last to the lessons we were to obtain from that struggle. Was it not possible that when that struggle was over—and they all hoped it would be early—a favourable opportunity might arise of bringing some such suggestion as he had made before the other great naval Powers? Again, another favourable element was that all the great naval Powers of Europe were now in the greatest possible state of efficiency. Very striking figures had appeared the other day in a great London journal to show the very great increase which had taken place in the last thirty years in the naval armaments of other countries. There was another element distinctly favourable to the consideration of his Motion in a practical spirit. It was the great part which His Majesty the King had played in promoting friendly relations between this country and other Powers in Europe. His Majesty had not only brought the Courts but the peoples of the three great Powers nearer to each other. Summing up the policy which would lead to a reduction in our armaments and pave the way to the realisation of the Motion now before the House, there were certain necessary conditions. First of all, everybody would concur with him as to the necessity for tightening the bonds between this country and the United States, and the necessity for cultivating friendly relations with all the great Powers of Europe. Some hon. friends on both sides of the House seemed to think that a reduction of the burden of the Navy on the people of this country might come about through an increased contribution from the Colonies. He was somewhat sceptical of ever realising that. Lastly, there was the necessity of consolidating, instead of expanding, our territorial Empire. If all these points were looked to, he thought the time was not very far distant when a very advantageous and practical result was to be obtained in the realisation of the Motion now being discussed. Before he concluded he must refer to a very important statement upon this subject made, in this House, by Mr., now Lord, Goschen, then First Lord of the Admiralty, in the year 1899. In introducing the Naval Estimates in March of that year Mr. Goschen made use of these words—

> "I have now to state on behalf of Her Majesty's Government that if the other great naval Powers should be prepared to diminish their programme of shipbuilding we should be prepared on our side to meet such a procedure by modifying ours."

Mr. Herbert Roberts.

These were explicit words, and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman when he came to reply on behalf of the Admiralty would make it clear how the Government now stood in regard to that explicit declaration, and how it was to be carried out. It was evident if those Estimates continued to expand at the present rate that they would increase far beyond the taxable capacity of the country. It was clear that they could not go on indefinitely in this manner and that the time would arrive when it would be necessary to settle the question in the direction of retrenchment.

That was the practical side of the Motion. It also had another side. The chief aim of Empire was to influence the higher qualities by all things which were honest and just and true. He believed that if that ideal could be realised it would bring inevitably in its train strength of dominion and permanence of power. While he was prepared to admit to the full the necessity for an efficient and adequate Navy, yet some kind of arrangement which would lead to the diminution of annually increasing expenditure would be a permanent blessing not only to this country but to all other countries concerned. It would make for international peace and for the progress of humanity. He was reading the other day a speech delivered by the late Mr. Gladstone in 1862, and he thought it would be well if the House of Commons cherished, more than it did, something of the horror which the late Mr. Gladstone and his contemporaries entertained in regard to extravagance in public expenditure. He said that all excess in public expenditure beyond the legitimate wants of the community, was not only waste but a great political and a great moral evil. The House and the country would do well to ponder on that sentiment, and it was on those general grounds and in that spirit that he desired to commend to the favourable attention of the House the Resolution which he now moved.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he wished to second the Motion of his hon. friend, and in doing so would not detain the House very long because his hon. friend had gone over the ground with great ability, and because he himself trespassed on the time of the House last session on the same subject. He approached the question almost exclusively from the financial point of view. He would not venture to put forward his opinion on a purely naval subject, though he hoped he would be allowed to make one observation on the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty, who appeared to him to give a wider interpretation as to what was known as the two-Power standard than had hitherto been given to it. The hon. Gentleman limited his comparisons to battleships, and expressly excluded cruisers, which were, he said, to be reserved for the purpose of protecting commerce.

MR. PRETYMAN said that perhaps he gave the House a false impression. He did not mean to convey that cruisers were not to be considered at all in arriving at a comparison between the naval strength of this country and of foreign countries. What he intended to say was that the comparison could not be confined to cruisers.

MR. BUCHANAN said he gathered from the hon. Gentleman's speech that he excluded cruisers altogether. In his opinion that was hardly fair, particularly as far as first-class cruisers were concerned. First-class cruisers were ships which would certainly be in the fighting line and which ought to be taken into consideration in any fair comparison between the fighting strength of this country and of other countries. Their tonnage amounted to 12,000, 13,000 or 14,000 tons, and they were powerfully armoured and ought to be taken into consideration. At present, as regarded first-class cruisers, this country was equal to the whole world. Its power in this department of naval strength was overwhelming. The hon. Gentleman said that as regarded battleships alone this country was equal to the two-Power standard. He wished to know if the hon. Gentleman included ships in course of construction in that comparison. He himself was under the impression that in 1906 this country would in battleships be equal not only to the two-Power standard but to the three-Power standard. There was no doubt that the country was not only well up to the two-Power standard but that it was considerably beyond it; and judged by that standard their position was amply secured at the present moment. The Secretary to the Admiralty began his speech, as all spokesmen of the Admiralty in recent years began their speeches, by a statement about the magnitude of the Estimates and the great burden they were imposing on the people, at which he expressed regret which no doubt he felt. He thought, however, hon. Members were getting somewhat weary of the introductory melancholy observations which fell from the representatives of the Admiralty. They reminded him of the annual observations of the hon. Member for West Islington on economy, which never led to anything. During the past ten years every representative of the Admiralty who had to submit increased Estimates for naval purposes always began his speech by a reference to their magnitude and how keenly the Admiralty felt the burden which they were imposing on the people. In 1898 Mr. Goschen, as he then was, in submitting Estimates for £23,500,000, described them as colossal. They would thank Heaven most sincerely if they could now get back to those Estimates. The present Secretary for War, when he was Secretary to the Admiralty, described the Estimates he introduced as quite unparalleled in peace or war. Still the Naval Estimates continued to increase from year to year, and the object of the Motion was to endeavour to get the House of Commons to consider how that increase could be arrested.

The First Lord's Statement gave most fully the expenditure under the various Naval Votes. He only wished the War Office were in the habit of issuing a similar statement for, if any hon. Member desired to see an illustration of the difference, he had only got to compare the information given in Lord Selborne's Statement with a very skimpy document which had been put into the Vote Office that afternoon by the War Office. This table in the Navy Estimates was a very valuable one, and conveyed information which the House had a perfect right to be informed of. That statement began just at the period when the present Government came into office. In the year 1895–6 the total amount of naval expenditure was £19,637,000, but that sum had gone up by leaps of £1,000,000,

£2,000,000 and £3,000,000, to £36,890,000, and in the course of ten years there had been an increase of £20,000,000. That was an enormous increase at the rate of no less than £10,000,000 every five years. In the year 1895–6 they voted 85,000 men. They were now asking for 131,000 men, or an increase of more than 50 per cent. in ten years. In 1895–6 Vote A stood at £9,000,000 and now it was £18,000,000, showing an increase of 100 per cent. But this was not all the naval expenditure for the year. As the House was well aware there was a considerable amount of naval expenditure not included in the Navy Estimates, and the expenditure on that score had also been steadily increasing year after year. He alluded more especially to the expenditure under the Naval Works Act. In 1895–6 the annual expenditure upon naval works was comparatively small, but it had been going up year after year, and on the 31st of March this year it would have reached no less than £3,490,000, or nearly £3,500,000. Therefore the total figure which they were going to spend during the currency of the present year, assuming that the expenditure upon naval works would not increase next year, was £40,718,000. That was an enormous expenditure for the House to be asked to vote for naval purposes, compared with what was considered adequate and satisfactory only five years ago. But the story did not end there, because within the limits of these Estimates there was an enormous amount of consequential, or what had been called automatic, expenditure involved. The sums of money they were asked to vote and the increase in the number of men if passed must inevitably lead to a very large increase in the Navy Estimates. He was not capable of judging the amount, but it would certainly be several millions of money, and therefore, he wished to call attention to one or two facts upon this subject.

The right hon. Gentleman opposite, dealing last year with the naval works, said it was hardly sufficiently realised by those who initiated the wholesale expansion of the Navy what that would amount to. Every year they became more and more aware of the truth of that statement which had been reiterated from time to time in the House of Commons, and by no one with greater vigour and conviction than Mr. Goschen. In introducing the Navy Estimates in 1896 Mr. Goschen reminded the House—

> "Thay any increase in the Fleet meant not only an increase in the number of ships but must be followed all along the line by expenditure in other directions. More ships meant more men to man them, more officers, more engineers, more stokers and more ratings of every kind, more centres of training, more accommodation, both on shore and sea, more schools, more hospital accommodation, and more barrack accommodation."

They were becoming now more and more alive to the overwhelming burden being imposed upon them by this continual expansion of the Navy. He should like to know what was involved in this increase in the number of men by 4,000 or 5,000. He wished to know what addition these extra men would make to the annual expenditure of the country some five or ten years from now. One Vote had hardly been affected at all by this increase and that Vote was one for pensions, which still stood at the figure which was adequate to meet 6,000 or 7,000 pensions. That was a Vote which was likely to largely increase in the future. Last year the House would remember that sanction was given to two practically new dockyards. The extensions to the Chatham Dockyard practically made it a new one, and then there was the establishment of a large dockyard in the Firth of Forth. They had not been able to get a statement from the Admiralty with regard to expenditure under the Naval Works Act upon those two dockyards, and still less were they able to ascertain the amount that would fall upon the Estimates for those purposes. He asked by means of a Question what had been the cost of the dockyards, and he was told that it was impossible for the Admiralty to give the figure. If they were going to add two extra dockyards with a full complement of men capable of building ships of a heavy character, they would be adding several millions to their annual expenditure. He did not wish to weary the House with figures, but he wished to ask was there no possibility of finality in this matter, and was it not possible, with all the expert knowledge which the Admiralty possessed, to give the House some idea when they considered that the Navy would be in accordance with the condition of naval strength rendered necessary by the shipbuilding programmes of foreign Powers, and when they would consider they had made sufficient provision for that purpose. They had occasionally had hopes held out that such a time might arrive. Mr. Goschen, in the year 1897, in one of his naval statements held out, if not the expectation, at any rate the aspiration, that such a point might be arrived at. If he might quote that somewhat unreliable prophet the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, he stated in 1902 that, after his experience of seven years at the Exchequer of the expenditure upon the Navy, in which they had increased their naval force relatively to the other great naval Powers, he saw no further reason for any increase in the naval expenditure of succeeding years. His anticipations had not been fulfilled and the expenditure went on increasing. They ought to get some promise that these Estimates would not continue to increase. Surely their naval expenditure ought not to increase out of all proportion to the growth of their revenue. He would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the words of Sir Robert Peel, who, when pressed for large expenditure, both on the Army and the Navy, stated, in reply to the Duke of Wellington, that there was to be considered, not only the urgency of the demand, but also the capacity of the taxpayers to bear the expenditure. It was of overwhelming importance in case of war that there should be a full Exchequer, a lightly-taxed people, and the ability to raise money on short notice at a low rate of interest. The object of this Amendment was to repeat the suggestion which had been made before, not only by the Opposition but also by the Government side of the House. In fact, the words of the Amendment were largely those used by Mr. Goschen in 1898. But Mr. Goschen was not the first to urge the importance of such a course being taken. It was Pitt's remedy at the end of the Great War; it was Peel's remedy in the forties, and was urged upon the House with overwhelming force at that time; it was also the remedy urged in 1859, 1860, and 1861 by Mr. Disraeli, who, when it was contended that this country could not take the initiative, asked what was the use of Government diplomacy, and cordial understandings, if this sort of thing could not be done. The House had a right to expect the Government to make the attempt. As to the contention that we must follow in the wake of action taken by other naval Powers, we were confessedly the first naval Power in the world, and if the Government sincerely believed that their naval programme was for the purpose of defence, and not of offence, they could with a clear conscience and clean hands go to other Powers and see whether some arrangement could not be made, at any rate, as regarded future expansion of naval programmes.

Reference had been made to the commerce on the lakes between Canada and the United States. Thanks to an international arrangement of forty years standing, neither this country nor the United States were put to the expense of maintaining any armed force on those vast inland waters, although they would be of great strategic importance in the event of any dispute between the two nations. That was a small illustration, but from it he argued that something might be attempted, and certainly the Government could do no harm to themselves or to the country by making the attempt. Possibly the outbreak of war in the Far East did not make the moment a favourable one for taking such steps, but the war would not last for ever, and possibly with its conclusion a better opportunity would present itself. In any case it was incumbent upon this House, as the guardians of the public exchequer, and as being anxious that every step consistent with the safety of the country should be taken to diminish the burden upon the taxpayers, to urge this year, as in previous years, the overwhelming responsibility which rested upon the Government of ascertaining whether by friendly negotiations with foreign Powers they could not come at any rate to a preliminary arrangement by which this enormous and increasing burden might be diminished.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in view of the heavy burdens placed upon the people of the country by this increasing expenditure, and in the interests of international peace, this House is of opinion that His Majesty's Government should enter into communication with the great naval Powers in order to ascertain whether they will be prepared to diminish their programmes of shipbuilding, and to adjust upon some permanent basis their relative naval strength.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Roberts.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.) said that as a member of the Defence Committee, and one who had been responsible to a certain extent for both services, perhaps it would not be out of place if he were to say a few words on the Amendment. The hon. Member who had just spoken, and the mover, need not anticipate from him any disagreement with the motives which he knew prompted the Amendment, and he should certainly be the last to treat their arguments with disrespect or discourtesy. He thought he had given evidence in the past that he was as sensible as they could be of the magnitude of the evils of which they complained. He supposed the experience of all who had to do with the administration of these great spending Departments was alike: he often felt that the horror of administering these enormous sums for unproductive purposes was something almost too saddening to one's political life. But he would try to recall the House to the operative part of the hon. Member's Amendment, which was the last part. He had listened to both speeches with interest, but he confessed a portion of them seemed to him to be rather in the nature of the tail of a comet, very easily compressible to a small amount of substance. The proposal now made was that the Government ought to do something more than it had already done in order to induce other nations to diminish their naval armaments in concurrence with our own; and in order to enforce that lesson a certain number of circumstances connected with the Naval Estimates and with the Army Estimates had been cited. The conclusion in itself was a very good one, no doubt, but he did not think the arguments supported it, or that by themselves they bore examination. He should like to ask what was the real value of recommendations of this kind unless hon. Members themselves would be prepared, if they were in a position of responsibility, to give effect to them. He ventured very respectfully to doubt whether the hon. Member, if he were, as he had no doubt he would be some day, in a position of responsibility, would be the first to give effect to the principles he now elaborated and the proposal he had put before the House. In the presence of his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty it would be out of place for him to dwell on the questions of standards and naval forces which were brought in to reinforce the arguments. He did not accept all that was said with regard to those standards, still less did he accept the authority which hon. Members seemed to arrogate to themselves to pronounce on these matters. He undoubtedly agreed with what the Secretary to the Admiralty had said—for instance, that the question of the cruiser standard was purely a technical question, which could not usefully be judged merely by comparing the numbers on one list with the numbers on another. And much as he respected the financial knowledge of the hon. Member for Perth, he did not think the hon. Member was a good expositor of the relative values of the armoured and unarmoured cruisers, and he confessed he preferred to take the considered judgment of the Admiralty on this point. But he did not argue that matter, because he did not think it really touched the question at issue very closely. He did rather protest against the argument used by the hon. Member who had just sat down, and the hon. Member before him, that they could at all judge of the character of our naval expenditure by merely comparing tonnage. Of course the tonnage test was so absolutely illusory that he need not dwell on it. If he were to enumerate a number of ships in our own Navy, which, owing to circumstances which had very little to do with their fighting capacity, had a larger tonnage than what he might call their opposite numbers in the navies of other Powers, he should be able to run up thousands of tons on the account without convincing himself, at any rate, that he had shown that there was any actual battle superiority on the one side as against the other. That was no argument against our constructors; because owing to the circumstances of our Empire we were compelled to make our ships of a character which was not imposed on other constructors. But he did not want to enter at all into these questions of constructive detail. He did want to dwell on the lesson which the hon. Member desired they should learn.

The hon. Member said we ought to go to foreign nations and tell them we desired the discontinuance of their naval energies, to be accompanied by the discontinuance of our own. Now, had we not done that in the most public way in which the thing could be done? The hon. Member himself had quoted the words of Mr. Goschen in that House. He himself, though in a much less important position than Mr. Goschen then occupied, had repeated, with the sanction of the Government of which he then formed a part, the pledge which was then given. He now in the most formal manner repeated it once more. He said that this country was prepared to consider any proposition of any foreign country with a view to reducing naval armaments which might be made. It might be said that foreign countries were not aware of what was said in the House of Commons. They were not such an obscure body as that. These proposals had been discussed, canvassed, and commented upon both in the Press and in the Parliaments of other countries. That being so, he thought we had done enough. The reason he thought we had done enough was that in this matter we were passive, that we were simply defending our own. The last European annexation we made was, he thought, the annexation of the island of Corsica, and from that time we had had no part in the alteration of the map of Europe except by relinquishing the portions of European territory that we held. It was fair, therefore, that we should ask other Powers to commence, for, in this connection we were dealing with a subject-matter which no other Power was dealing with. We were dealing with the absolute life of our nation. Who could say of any single European nation that the maintenance or the increase of its fleet stood in the same proportion of importance as it did to us? What would happen if a foreign country were to diminish its fleet? Could we invade it? If it had no fleet at all we could not invade it? Our Army Establishments were not on that scale. Foreign countries knew perfectly well that they had nothing to fear from us in that way. There was not a single country in Europe that could not practically abolish its fleet to-morrow so far as any danger from us was concerned. Our Fleet, on the other hand, was our one guarantee against invasion by those colossal armies of the Continent which would be at liberty to invade this country immediately our maritime protection was gone. That argument might not carry conviction to hon. Members opposite, but with him it had very great weight. This Government had gone certainly as far any Government which preceded it had gone, and he thought as far as any Government of this country was entitled to go, in putting our views before the Chancelleries of Europe. The hon. Member opposite cited Mr. Gladstone as a preacher in this matter, and quoted him in support of the almost immoral obliquity of increasing the Estimates. There were ways direct and indirect of increasing the Estimates. He remembered very well, not when the Navy Estimates stood at £9,000,000, but when they stood at £13,000,000, and, at that time, when there was a threatened war with France, it was with difficulty that we could add two battleships to the British Fleet. What was the consequence? Directly Mr. Gladstone went out of office £21,000,000 had to be voted for the service of the Navy, with the consent of every sensible man in this country, in order to repair the inadequacy of the Navy. He did not consider that a great economy. If hon. Members could go, as he had gone, all over the Continent to the great naval and military establishments; if they could see the activity with which naval and military preparations were carried on; if they could see the enormous expenditure and the enormous intellectual effort which were devoted to the increase of the naval and military forces of foreign Powers, then they would realise that this instinct of self-protection on our part was not altogether unjustified.

But he did not measure this question merely by the Navy Estimates or the Military Estimates of a single year. The hon. Member opposite said that nothing was a greater protection than a buoyant Exchequer and a prosperous people. He remembered another country which had a buoyant Exchequer and a prosperous people. He remembered also when Lord Granville informed the House of Lords that there was not a cloud on the European horizon and when twelve months after that declaration, a country with a buoyant Exchequer and a prosperous people had to pay five milliards for the liberty to exist. He remembered, too, that these little miscalculations did not end with that five milliards, and that France had had to pay ever since the most terrific toll for recuperating after that calamity, and for restoring to itself that position of confidence which every great country aspired to possess, and which, he hoped, this country would never abandon Those were the costs which they had to pay for neglect in these matters; and though he was always willing, and should be always willing, to take any step which he believed to be reasonable to induce the Powers of Europe to co-operate with us in the reduction of armaments, he would never accept the argument, unless it were backed up by much better reasons than he had heard that afternoon, that we should reduce the expenditure on our Navy, in deference to what was, after all, somewhat amateur criticism of the calculations the Admiralty had made.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS said he did not ask the Government to reduce our armaments unless the other Powers were prepared to do the same. What he suggested was—and this was the whole *crux* of the matter—that, having regard to our special position in this matter, it would be well for us to take the initiative and make a representation to the other Powers.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the mind of the Government as expressed last year was the mind of the Government now. They were prepared now, as they were prepared then, to accept any proposal from countries less interested than this country in a reduction of naval expenditure which should be carried on, *pari passu*, by the nations of the world. There would be no Government which would hail with greater satisfaction than that which now sat on those Benches the successful realisation of any proposal which would allow them to reduce this lamentable expenditure of money upon the means of war, whether it was for the Army or the Navy.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that, while the right hon. Gentleman had made an important concession to the sentiments of his own friends, the language he used in the earlier portion of his speech did not prepare him for the conclusion at which he ultimately arrived. The right hon. Gentleman quarrelled with the arguments of his hon. friends. But they did not find fault, as he understood them, with the standard set up by the Admiralty nor with the application made by the Admiralty of that standard. The figures they used were designed to prepare the way for the operative part of the Resolution by showing that the burden of the Navy Estimates was growing year by year and was now, he did not say excessive, but oppressive on the resources of the country. Neither the right hon. Gentleman nor his colleagues would deny that for the last nine years the Estimates had been growing steadily at the rate of about £2,000,000 a year. The net Navy Estimates did not show the whole extent of our burden. Including the Appropriations-in-Aid, the money to be raised under the Naval Works Loan, and the sums borne upon Civil Service Estimates for naval purposes, the naval expenditure for the coming year would be not the sum mentioned in the Estimates, but a sum of £42,300,000. To that had to be added the amount of money under the Naval Works Loans Act, which he took to be no less than £4,000,000. There was also a not inconsiderable sum borne on the Civil Service Estimates for naval purposes which was never mentioned. That amounted to £335,000. After knocking off £634,000 required to pay interest and to establish the sinking fund under the Naval Works Loans Act the gross result was that the naval expenditure of the coming year, according to the proposals now before the House, would be not the sum mentioned, but a sum of £42,300,000. [An Hon. Member: And the Supplementary Estimates as well.] He was assuming that there would be no Supplementary Estimates. These figures proved the first part of his hon. friend's case that naval expenditure was growing, and the second that it was oppressive. There was no sign of any limit or of any relief, for the colonial contribution was infinitesimal. Therefore a case had been made out for the consideration of his hon. friend's proposal.

What was the answer of the Secretary of State for War? From his answer it appeared that the sole point left at issue between the Government and his hon. friend was as to who should take the initiative. The right hon. Gentleman in the earlier part of his speech was unfair to the Government, and he was unfair even to himself, because on many occasions in former days when he occupied a position of less responsibility he came nearer to his hon. friend's position than when he said to-day that no person had ever gone so far as Mr. Goschen in 1898. The right hon. Gentleman forgot the most important of all the steps taken. When Mr. Goschen declared that if Russia was going to build a certain number of ships we would build against them, and that if Russia did not go on we would not, then Russia issued the invitation to the Hague Conference. Lord Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister, accepted the invitation to The Hague Conference. At that Conference the representatives of the various Governments of Europe passed a Resolution accepting the principle that there should be a concurrent and reciprocal reduction of naval armaments, and they recommended their respective Governments to take the very step which the Amendment now called upon them to take. In July last in this House, in answer to a Question whether he would do what his hon. friend now asked to be done, the Prime Minister said the Government had not altered their views, and that if any Government would take the initiative we should be glad to join them, but it must be remembered that the expenditure on the British Fleet alone among the fleets of the world, or almost alone, was mainly of a defensive character, and that the other fleets of the world could not claim to have that character. But was there any nation in the world that would not claim that its fleet was defensive? The initiative ought to come from us if for no other reason that after that statement any other Power taking the initiative would be fitting the cap offered by the Prime Minister on to its head and admitting that its fleet had the offensive character he attributed to it. We had one character which no other nation would dispute. Our Fleet at present held absolute supremacy on the seas. It was our object to maintain that supremacy, but as we were in the supreme position we could afford to take the step Russia took in 1898 better than any other nation.

*Mr. HARRIS (Tynemouth) said it was a matter of regret that circumstances had forced on the country such heavy expenditure on our Army and Navy. In view of all the circumstances of the case he thought that it lay rather with other Powers than with us to make a commencement in the direction of curtailment. In the desire for increased armaments which was so evident among all the great Powers of Europe we could not afford to be left behind. We had a responsibility to bear and obligations to meet which they had not. We owned practically half of the mercantile tonnage of the world. We had to look to the protection of a fourth of the earth's area, and a fourth of its population. So long as other nations continued to increase the amount they spent on their Navies we perforce were obliged to do the same. In listening to the figures given by the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment he was reminded of a speech by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Islington last year in which he stated that in the twenty years between 1863 and 1883 our trade had increased from £13 to £21 per head, while in the twenty succeeding years it had only increased by £1 per head. Those things must give the hon. Gentleman, with his pronounced views of free trade, some anxiety in regard to the future trade of the country. He believed those figures were absolutely accurate; while we were obliged to spend those huge sums on our Navy and Army, we had at the same time to face this enormous decrease in the percentage of the prosperity of the country. But there were other circumstances which should carry more weight. He asserted that if we looked to our over-sea trade, to the great commercial interests involved in all quarters of the world, our existence as an Empire depended upon our mercantile marine. Looking to these considerations, if the Estimates erred at all, they erred on the side of being too small instead of being too large. We had fixed for our Navy a two-Power standard; but there had been two definitions of what that standard was. The Secretary to the Admiralty said that our Navy should be such that this country should be able to engage in a naval war with reasonable probability of emerging victorious from a contest with two naval Powers. He observed that the First Lord of the Admiralty had gone rather beyond that definition, for his Lordship said, we must have—

> "A Navy strong enough to sustain a struggle with the navies of any two Powers, and also strong enough to ensure reasonable security to its vast sea-borne trade, and to the food supply of the people."

It was in connection with the sea-borne trade that he wished to make a few remarks; but, before doing so, he desired to put before the House a further consideration in regard to the two-Power standard. To his mind a two-Power standard should not only be sufficient to enable us to hold and defeat the navies of two other nations, but should suffice to ensure the due arrival of stores and ammunition of war in every quarter of the world, to protect our transports to India and the Colonies, to safeguard our coaling stations and the great service these would be able to render to our fleet and our mercantile marine, and to leave a sufficient margin over to keep open the great trade routes and protect our mercantile marine. At the commencement of last year Admiral Freemantle wrote a very interesting magazine article in which he expressed the opinion that we required 160 additional cruisers to fulfil the conditions of a two-Power standard, and at the same time maintain our mercantile supremacy at sea. He was inclined to agree with that opinion, and, as a shipowner, and representing a shipping constituency, he must say he felt the greatest anxiety and apprehension as to what our position would be in the next great naval war. He need not remind the House that this country had to depend on its sea-borne trade for, not only the food we consume, but also the raw material we worked up in our factories and workshops. Unless, therefore, we could ensure the due arrival of this food and raw material, and the due export of our manufactured articles, we should be at the mercy of any foreign Power that chose to starve our population, or close our factories and workshops. He remembered reading a speech by an eminent statesman in which he said, speaking of this country, that "stomachs count for more than arms." There was an element of truth in that remark, and he believed that we had as much to fear in the future from starving people at home, as from the arms of any nation or combinations of nations against us. And it was because he was convinced that we should pay more attention to absolutely ensuring the due arrival of food and raw materials, that he urged the Government not be led away by criticisms which might be passed on the amount of the Estimates. No one knew what would happen in the next war, but he would read a quotation from the Press of the day which showed what an enormous amount of damage could be done to the shipping of any country even by a small number of armed cruisers. It referred to the war of 1812—

> "The public will learn, with sentiments which we shall not presume to anticipate, that a third British frigate has struck to an American. This is an occurrence which calls for serious reflection, this and the facts stated in one paper of yesterday that Lloyd's list contains notice of upwards of 500 vessels captured in seven months by the Americans."

It was to be remembered that at that time the United States had no more than sixteen or eighteen ships of war, whilst we had eighty-five on the American station. Privateering was forbidden under the Declaration of Paris. But in 1870 the Prussian Government obtained the services of a certain number of merchant vessels, manned them with their own officers, furnished them with papers, and sailed them under the Prussian flag. Thus in the space of a few hours they converted what would have been privateers in other circumstances into recognised belligerents. That could be done again in another war, and showed that privateering had only been abolished in name and not in fact. It was said that under the Declaration of Paris this country would benefit by being able to obtain supplies of food and raw material in neutral vessels. Although that might appear so at first sight, as a matter of fact it constituted a greater danger to this country than if that provision had never existed at all. Mr. Cobden, in the course of a speech delivered in 1856, shortly after the Declaration of Paris was signed, said—

> "Have you ever thought of the effects that would be produced in English shipping property in case of war with America or other maritime Power, owing to the principle now being formally admitted that free ships make free goods? All our carrying trade would, of course, be in the hands of neutrals, who would carry goods in English bottoms, and pay 20 per cent. against capture, when ships under other flags would sail without any such burden."

To his mind the danger of our trade being forced into the hands of neutral owners by reason of this provision in the Declaration of Paris was one we should guard against as greater than the danger of capture itself. The cost of insurance was regulated by the protection that our Navy would be able to give to our mercantile marine, and consequently the less protection it was able to afford, the more our British shipowners and shipping would be handicapped as against neutral owners and neutral vessels. We had only to look at the experience of America during the Civil War. In 1860 the United States was paramount amongst nations as a great shipping Power; it was only second to Great Britain in the amount of its tonnage. In that year forty-one American ships were transferred from the American to the British flag, and in 1863 346 American ships of a tonnage of 252,000 tons were transferred to our flag, because American shipowners found that they were unable to affect insurances on their vessels, and rather than lay them up they sold them to foreigners. At the end of the Civil War the American mercantile fleet had practically ceased to exist—it had either been sold, or captured by a few Confederate cruisers. He might be told that if we looked to the experience of the past, to the war with France, we should find that British shipping prospered, and even at the end of the war was in a more flourishing condition than before. But he would point out that the conditions then were very different from what they were to-day. At that time any vessel carrying a British cargo was liable to capture, and therefore the cost of insurance on foreign ships was higher than on even British ships, which were able to enjoy the protection afforded by our convoy system. But to-day the convoy system was impossible. Under modern conditions it could not be expected that steamships would collect in large numbers and wait until a convoy had been prepared. They must look to other means for the protection of the mercantile marine. There was one system, and one system only, by which the mercantile marine could be properly protected, and that was the proper patrolling of the great trade routes. It was estimated that if the Suez Canal were closed, our vessels would pass any given spot between the Cape and Plymouth at the rate of one per hour, and it was evident therefore that a foreign commerce destroyer might in a few hours inflict a great amount of damage on the mercantile marine and produce a panic in this country which would increase the price of all commodities. He looked with great apprehension to what the next naval war might bring forth; and he hoped the Government would reject the *dicta* of those who considered only the pockets of the taxpayers, and that they would look at the interests of the Empire generally and the welfare of our mercantile marine.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said that the hon. Member who had just spoken delivered a speech in favour of a strong Navy, and discussed a variety of topics of great general interest, but he failed to see what bearing the hon. Member's speech had on the Motion. He thought, however, that the hon. Gentleman ought to be excused for the course he had taken, because the greater part of the speech of the Minister for War was in the same direction. It ignored the Motion and devoted itself to fighting against what had not been set up by any hon. Gentleman. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that there were sitting on the Opposition Benches men who were just as keen about the Navy and as anxious to have it strong and efficient as any hon. Members in any quarter of the House. But that was not what they were now discussing. He was aware of the gravity of such matters, and if a responsible Minister said that it was necessary to spend a certain amount in order to make the Navy efficient, he himself might grieve over the amount but he would hesitate long before he would oppose the expenditure. That was not the question, however, they were discussing at present. The Motion made a specific proposition, which was that it was the duty of the Ministry to enter into negotiations with other countries with a view to reducing the expenditure not of this country alone but of all the great naval Powers, and to establish some sort of balance of expenditure. The Secretary of State for War said that he was in sympathy with the spirit of the Motion and in accordance with the proposition which underlay it. One would expect that something other than what the right hon. Gentleman said would follow from that. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Navy was only for defence, and that this country had not annexed anything in Europe since Corsica many years ago, and he contended that it was not for this country to take the first step, that it was stated by Mr. Goschen on behalf of the Government that this country would be prepared to enter into negotiations, and that, therefore, there was no obligation upon it to take the first step. He himself ventured to think that if this was a serious topic, and he thought it was, it would have to be handled in a very different fashion if any progress were to be made in regard to it. Their chief complaint was that the question seemed to be treated as if it were a Departmental question. It was not a Departmental question, but a diplomatic question of the very first magnitude and importance. It was a matter to be handled by the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary, and if the Prime Minister, for reasons which they all regretted, was unable to give the House his views on the subject then they should expect from some Minister who represented the policy of the Government generally, and especially its diplomatic policy, some statement as to what the attitude of the Government on the subject was. It was not enough to say that the Navy was for the purposes of defence. He doubted very much if this country appeared to other Powers in the light in which, no doubt justly, it appeared to the right hon. Gentleman. There were other parts of the world besides Europe. There was Burma, the north-east corner of Africa, and the whole of South Africa. He wondered what other Powers would think of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman when they bore in mind, no matter for what sufficient reasons, that the position of this country was enormously greater in point of control and possession of territory than it was even a few years ago. He trusted that the Navy would continue to exist for defensive purposes only; but every Power regarded its armaments for the purposes of defence. Therefore he thought that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman altogether ignored the point of the Motion.

The right hon. Gentleman having expressed sympathy with the Motion, they were entitled to be told that the Ministry had taken every step they could to make progress and give effect to the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman, and also that action would be taken by the Foreign Office with a view of following up such a declaration. Nothing having been said on that point, it was not too much to assume that very little had been done. He did not anticipate that any progress would be made in this matter until this country had taken the initiative. After all, it was a question of *noblesse oblige*. This country had immense naval strength relatively to foreign fleets. It was in a very formidable position, and unless it took the initiative he did not see how they could put pressure on other nations. He was quite aware that it was a very difficult matter, but there was one thing that gave him hope that such negotiations might not be altogether without fruit. It should be borne in mind that other countries were also being pressed with naval expenditure, just as this country was. The French Minister of Marine recently pointed that out; and within the last week observations were made by a responsible person on behalf of the French Government in that sense. He thought there was nothing to fear as regarded France. He would not discuss the position of Russia, for Russia might hereafter be very willing to come to any arrangement it could upon the subject of limiting naval expenditure. He would not discuss the United States, because he had always maintained that the two-Power standard had nothing whatever to do with the United States. He refused to contemplate war with the United States as being within the range of practical politics; and he did not anticipate that any good would come from any attempt to arrange a standard on the basis of war with the United States. The country had developed enormously, and it should be a paramount part of the diplomacy of this country to be on friendly terms with the United States. Germany was more difficult than the other Powers. She was rapidly developing her Navy, but it was a small Navy as compared with the Navy of this country. It was quite true that the German shipbuilding programme would bring up the Germany navy to a substantial level in a few years; but Germany was being pressed with naval expenditure at the present moment, and it was not altogether a source of strength to her Government. He believed that the present moment was probably more ripe than it had been for some time past to enter into those negotiations; but this country should take the initiative, and they should not have such speeches as that which had been delivered by the Secretary for War. This was a question which demanded the intervention in the debate of some one who would speak not for a Department but for the Government as a whole, and would be able to give an assurance that he represented the policy of the Foreign Office in the matter. It was not a question of the strength of the Navy, it was a question as to the relations between different navies at the present time. He was one of those who thought that the strength of the Navy was included in the policy of the country. He could conceive a case being made for less expenditure on the Navy, if they pursued a policy which would get rid of the dependence of this country on imports, and make the Empire self-trading within its own limits. But as long as they maintained the country as a great free-trade country they needed the most powerful Navy in the world. That Navy he desired to have, and he did not desire to imperil it. He did not believe the country would grudge any expenditure in making the Navy as efficient as possible; but while maintaining that position the Government should be able to satisfy the taxpayers that they had done everything in their power to keep down the relative proportions of the navies of the great Powers to the Navy of this country. Otherwise they would run the risk of the naval policy of the country losing its present popularity, and from that point of view he regretted the speech which had been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said it was too much taken for granted that all foreign navies were intended to operate against us. He did not think that could be proved. In the course of the debate on the Navy last year, he took occasion to point out that a debate took place in the German Parliament in which great exception was taken to the strength of the German Navy, because it was not in a satisfactory condition compared with the Italian or the Russian. Nothing was said as regarded the English Navy. It did not follow that if we were prepared to diminish our Navy that other countries would be in a satisfactory naval position as regarded each other. It was quite conceivable that the upshot of a proposal to decrease our Navy would result very much like the admirable proposal of Russia in regard to the Hague Convention. They ought not to adopt hastily any proposal which would tie their hands in the future. It was not for him to say whether this particular moment was an auspicious one for such a proposal, but they ought to bear in mind that we were not the only naval Power in the world, and that it was not only against us that other countries built their ships. Foreign countries had issues of their own to consider, and therefore it was not desirable that we should do anything which would be ineffective now and restrict our freedom in the future.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said this Resolution asked His Majesty's Government to enter into communications with the other great Powers. Suppose the Government did this, what practical result could they possibly get from such a proceeding? He had very little confidence in such a proposal, even if the Government accepted it, for communication with the great naval Powers would not really lead to economy in finance. They did not find much encouragement from the result of such conferences, as those which met at the Hague, or from the Geneva Conference, for twenty years after the Geneva Conference we had a war in South Africa. If hon. Members really had any desire for economy they would not get it through conferences with naval Powers, but the best course was to denounce both in this House and in the country the enormous Estimates which the Government were asking for to keep up the Navy. Where was it all going to end? Not many years ago the Navy Estimates amounted to £23,000,000, and now they amounted to £36,000,000. He could see no finality in these figures, and they might ultimately grow to £60,000,000. There might come a time when they would amount to as much as £70,000,000 or £80,000,000, because what had been pointed out on this side of the House up to the present was only a part of the annual expenditure on the Navy. He had read carefully the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and there was no mention in it of these other items of expenditure, although it pointed to the fact that the Estimates now asked for amounted to £36,899,000 as against £34,000,000 for the current year. This £36,000,000 concealed from the country the amount which had been spent on the naval dockyards and all the money voted under the Naval Works Act of last year. These immense sums, amounting perhaps to £4,000,000, £5,000,000, or perhaps £6,000,000, did not come before the House in the ordinary way for criticism. He thought they were matters which ought to excite more indignation among his hon. friends above the Gangway than they seemed to do. He listened last year to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol asking the various Government Departments to practise economy. Now hon. Members on the Opposition side were asking for a reduction on these Estimates by suggesting some agreements between naval Powers. He did not think that was the proper way to secure economy. The first thing to do was to reduce your own Naval Estimates and then other countries would do the same. What was the cause of other naval Powers increasing their Navy Estimates? England was the greatest sinner in this respect. What country had shown the biggest increase? This country had spent the most in this direction, for their naval expenditure was going up by leaps and bounds. That was the way in which it seemed to him economy ought to be brought about in this House instead of doing it in an indirect way by a Resolution of this kind. He did not desire to keep a strong Navy, for what was the good of a strong Navy to Ireland. They were going to build big battleships, submarine boats, and torpedo destroyers, and they could not even get a gunboat to defend the fisheries in Ireland, although they had had many complaints about the way fishing was carried out by foreigners. He had moved reductions upon every single Navy Vote on the ground that as an Irish Member Ireland got no benefit whatever from this huge expenditure on the Navy. He could quite understand, for instance, why the Colonies were proud of the Navy, and he could understand why the Navy was of great use to the Colonies, because, by an agreement entered into this year, he found in the case of Australia——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! An agreement between the Colonies and this country in regard to the Navy cannot be discussed under this Motion.

Mr. O'MARA explained that his objection to the growing expenditure was that Ireland had to bear a heavy proportion while the Colonies escaped.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that that was rather wide of the subject under discussion.

MR. O'MARA asked whether he was not at liberty to explain the grounds of his objection to the growing expenditure on the Navy.

***MR. SPEAKER**: Yes, if they are relevant to the Motion before the House. But I think the hon. Member is going too far if he attempts to discuss the contribution made by the Colonies or the use of gunboats to protect the fisheries of Ireland. Those matters may be brought up on other occasions, but not on the Motion now before the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) asked whether it was not permissible to urge, as a reason for objecting to the continually growing expenditure on the Navy, the fact that the Colonies did not in any adequate way contribute thereto.

***MR. SPEAKER**: I think it is objectionable on this Amendment. When the hon. Member proceeds to discuss the relations between the Colonies and this country, and the agreement with Australia, he is going beyond the Motion before the House.

MR. O'MARA said that all he desired to point out was that by the new agreement six warships were devoted to the protection of the Colonies which subscribed only £400,000, while Ireland, who had to pay £2,000,000, received no benefit whatever from the Navy. The fact that two new dockyards had been constructed in England intensified the grievance felt by Ireland that no fully equipped dockyards existed in that country. Although some good might come of the Resolution, he felt that if its supporters really had the interests of economy at heart, they ought to take the direct road of moving reductions on the Estimates, and of opposing the growing extravagance of the Government. The pockets of the people of this country were not unlimited, and at its present rate the enormous expenditure would exhaust the resources and cripple the industries of the nation.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said that a week ago he had found it his duty to make some strong observations on the growth of expenditure, and therefore it was only right that he should again take part in directing attention to the subject, although the Estimates under consideration were those for the Navy. He would at once admit that on the question of maintaining a strong Navy there was an almost universal agreement. The Navy attracted to itself most rightly a great deal of popular sympathy and confidence; and a tendency to increase expenditure was more likely to meet with approval in respect of the Navy than in respect of almost any other department of the public service. But it was somewhat remarkable—and the House could probably derive comfort from the fact—that there should be this increase of £2,500,000 in the Navy Estimates this year, because it must naturally be supposed that the Government, before agreeing to so large an increase, must have looked to the financial position of the country, and have satisfied themselves that the country could afford this expenditure without inconvenience. Therefore, the Government must have found that the revenue of the coming year would be more than sufficient to cover any excess of this kind. Some comfort was to be extracted from this consideration, because it was impossible to imagine any Government which, contemplating a narrow equipoise of revenue and expenditure, and still more a deficit, would bring forward as the very first Estimates to be laid before the House an increase of £2,500,000. The Navy was popular, and all wished to see it maintained in adequate strength. But the House looked for their guide in that matter not to the Board of Admiralty, but to the Cabinet and the Government at large. There was a singular passage in the explanatory statement of the First Lord, to which he would call attention for a moment. It was as follows—

> "The Board of Admiralty are well aware that the charge they are asking Parliament to sanction is a heavy one, but Parliament must remember how heavy is the responsibility cast by it on the Board of providing the country with a Navy strong enough to sustain a struggle with the navies of any two Powers, and also strong enough to ensure reasonable security to its vast sea-borne trade, and to the food supply of the people."

That was not to state the matter quite fairly. The question of responsibility was not one as between Parliament and the Board of Admiralty, but as between

Parliament and the Government. This was rather a usurpation by the Board of Admiralty of the responsibility constitutionally attaching to the Government. In all technical and professional matters, the opinions of the Board of Admiralty should have the greatest weight; but the Government had to take into consideration other matters with which the professional members of the Board of Admiralty had nothing to do. In the first place, the Government had to consider what they knew of the disposition and intentions of this country towards other countries, and of other countries among themselves and towards us. They must know all that in a much more deep and intimate sense than would be conveyed by the courteous phrases usually employed in the King's Speech. Then the Government were also acquainted with the financial position of the country. They knew whether the country could afford all that the professional advisers wished to see provided, and on these grounds he declined to accept the doctrine that the Board of Admiralty was responsible to the House of Commons. It was the Government that was responsible. From this point of view as well as others he regretted the absence of the Prime Minister, because the right hon. Gentleman could have told the House better than anyone else what was the view on this question of the Cabinet at large, and he could have given an authoritative statement as to what might be called the naval policy of the Government. The House was quite at sea with regard to naval policy. A great deal had been said about a two-Power standard. The investigations which he had made of the figures pointed rather to the standard of this country being a three-Power standard. But, in any case, the fact remained that according to the accounts now presented we were simply drifting—simply playing a game of follow-my leader, infused with a strong dash of that other game "beggar-my-neighbour."

The statement of the First Lord said that the Board asked for nothing which they did not believe to be necessary; that they had avoided giving any stimulus to the expansion of armaments by the formulation of large programmes, but that when such programmes were adopted by other Powers, they had no choice but to take them into account. That was the unbroken story. We built, and then others Powers with which we matched ourselves followed suit. Next year the Government would come forward and use the fact that they had indulged in an increase as a reason for further construction. They would cite it as a reason for a further advance; and so things went on. What was wanted was to try to stop this absurd and ruinous rivalry. The right hon. Gentleman said that our Navy existed for defensive purposes. Other States could say the same of their navies; they existed for offensive and defensive purposes. But do not let us be so insincere with ourselves as to conceal from ourselves the fact that this was the case. Undoubtedly we had a position in the world which required us, beyond the requirements of any other country, to maintain our Navy in a full state of efficiency; but were we to go on with this game, this constant race in armaments, without any hope of reducing them? The proposal of his hon. friend must commend itself to every reasonable man—namely, that an effort should be made to bring other nations into counsel in the matter in order to see whether we could not come to an understanding to save both them and us from the sacrifices that were evidently in front of all? The right hon. Gentleman said that the Government had already done this, that Ministers in both Houses had made certain statements which expressed our willingness to the world. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer said last year that he hoped there would be some sort of reasonable agreement between the Powers. Other Powers had said the same thing, and France had gone further. The Finance Minister in France had warned his countrymen of the extreme limit of the sacrifices that could be imposed upon them, both for land and sea services, and on 23rd November M. Delcassé spoke about the good relations which happily existed between most of the nations and the desire for an agreement on questions that divided them. In discussing a Motion like this, that France should take the initiative in suggesting a reduction of armaments to other

Powers, M. Delcassé said: "France has no need to speak to the nations; she has acted for several years so that her naval and military estimates have been slightly lower." The Secretary for War laughed—

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I said they were reduced by £400.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that, whatever the reduction was, the estimates were "slightly lower," and France did not increase them by £2,500,000. M. Delcassé had shown again and again what a friend of this country he was, always in subordination to his friendship and loyalty for his own country. "Other nations," M. Delcassé added, "can follow her example; acts are worth more than idle words." He agreed that some of the words let fall by the right hon. Gentleman were of a satisfactory nature; but no mere repetition of what Lord Salisbury said in the House of Lords and the Prime Minister said in the House of Commons on previous occasions, which were little more than the *obiter dicta* of individual Ministers, could be held to take the place of the opinion of the Cabinet. They would never do any good unless they showed that they were in earnest and were sincere. He therefore regretted that the Government had not seen their way to take the moderate, reasonable, and wise step proposed in the Amendment. He would certainly support the Amendment as a demonstration of the wish which he believed to be general in this House. If the Amendment was agreed to by the House he believed that it would express the general opinion of the House better than the negative attitude which the Government seem to think sufficient.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the Secretary of State for War no doubt felt bound to take part in this discussion owing to the office he filled at the Admiralty before he occupied his present position at the War Office. The right hon. Gentleman had twitted the House with what he termed amateur criticism, but the word amateur might, in his opinion, also be applied to the administration of the War Office and the Admiralty at the present time, having regard to the fact that all the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench at the present time had been lately at the War Office or the Admiralty. After the ruling given by Mr. Speaker he felt himself in a difficulty in this debate as he was debarred in consequence from entering into and referring to the absurd relations of the Colonies with reference to the enormous expenditure which this House was asked to undertake from time to time in respect to the Navy. The terms of the Resolution of the hon. Members were to call attention to the continual increase in the charges for naval expenditure; and to move—

> "That, in view of the heavy burdens placed upon the people of the country by this increasing expenditure"——

In this relation the expenditure must be taken to include Ireland as well as England, and from that point of view he must repeat the protest he had made year after year so long as he had been in this House. From an Irish point of view he protested against this expenditure. The people of Ireland derived no advantage from it. They found it difficult even to get the service of a gunboat to protect their fisheries, nor did they derive any benefit in the shape of wages in their shipbuilding yards. In the words of the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, "Where was this game going to end?" He knew there were Members of the House who did not regard an increase of £2,000,000 on the last year's Estimates as a matter of much importance, but others who had listened to such statements as had been made from the Treasury Bench year after year, regarded it in quite a different light. Not so many years ago the Naval Estimates were little more than half what they were at present, and year after year there had been the same story of millions added to the expenditure, and it was time for somebody to ask the question, "Where is this expenditure going to stop or when the limit will be reached?" What had been the result of all this expenditure? Were they any safer or more sure that if they were attacked they were any more secure in their defence? They saw only the other day how in the course of an hour, with a run of ill luck, £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 in ships might be destroyed. From the English point of view, though not from his point of view, it was inadvisable to spend money in the reckless way in which it was spent, in the hope of being able to produce a Fleet which would dominate all the other Fleets of the world. However, if the people of this country allowed themselves to be led into a state of ruin by the young men who had now got charge of the Army and Navy Departments, all he could say was that the look-out would be bad for this country. He was in the position of protesting against this expenditure on behalf of people who were taxed against their will, but if he were the representative of the English taxpayer he would be exceedingly sorry to find the Army and Navy Departments controlled by a number of gentlemen whose personal excellence he would be the last in the world to call in question, but who were, to say the least of it, a lot of inexperienced young men. In regard to the young man representing the Admiralty, he dared say that in the course of half-a-dozen years or so he would develop into a first-rate Government departmental official, but he might be allowed to ask without offence What did the hon. Gentleman know about the Navy when he had just arrived in his present office? He did not mean any disrespect when he said that one might take anyone from the lobby outside, a policeman for choice, and put him there. He had not the slightest intention of being disrespectful to the hon. Gentleman. He considered that the system which allowed any inexperienced Member of this House to be promoted as the representative of a great Department was not right. He did not think it was business. If this extraordinary expenditure was to be undertaken it ought to be administered by men of knowledge and experience of the Departments. Nobody could say that he was wanting in respect, or personally offensive when he alleged that these qualities could not be possessed by the young men who had been promoted for one reason or another, without going through any probationary course at all, so far as one could judge. These reflections would not have come to his mind had it not been for the statement of the Secretary of State for War that the criticism was amateurish. In regard to amateurishness the less he said the better. It was not business that they should not have in this House the head of the Navy Department. There was an expenditure proposed of £36,500,000 on the Navy at a time when peace was supposed to prevail, and when everybody was led to believe that there would be a great curtailment of expenditure both in the Navy and Army. With the other items referred to by the hon. Member for Dundee the expenditure was brought up to £42,000,000. Why was not the head of the Department in this House? He did not speak in terms of disrespect of the First Lord of the Admiralty because he happened to be a Peer. It was not his fault, but the head of the Navy ought to be here.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. Member that the question before the House is the Amendment. The question whether the First Lord of the Admiralty should be in this House or the other does not arise on this Amendment.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he bowed to that ruling. He had not the slightest desire to travel outside of the Amendment. The references he was making were references he had made year after year.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Not on the same Amendment.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said there were other occasions on which he made them. He would not refer to that matter further at the present time, but he had no doubt there would be an opportunity of taking notice of something that would not be tolerated in any business firm, namely, that the officer responsible for the expenditure was not present. The Secretary of State for War had stated somewhat petulantly that the communication asked for in the Amendment had been made over and over again. There was no need for petulance in these matters. He ventured to assert, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that no such communication had been entered into with any foreign Power. He wanted to know why such communications should not be entered into. Whether they believed in the *bonâ fides* of foreign Powers or not there could be no objection to asking for an interchange of opinion in this matter. He protested on behalf of the Irish taxpayers, against having to pay a farthing of this cost, which was of no use to the Irish people now, or at any other time.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 174; Noes, 122. (Division List No. 30.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold-Forster Rt Hon Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher Rt Hon Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Federick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell Rt. Hn. J A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T R (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt Hon Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gore Hon S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Gull, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton Rt Hn Ld G. (Midd'x
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks N. R
Lee, Arthur H (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N S
Lockwood, Lieut.- Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Federick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt Hon Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Wilson-Todd, Sir W H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hn. Herbert Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davis, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark.)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H. Maidstone
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Leng, Sir John
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwell)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly James (Roscommon N)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Charles M (Durham
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond John E (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William (Snowdon)
Roche, John
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds S)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Roberts and Mr. Buchanan.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [29th February], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) said there were one or two matters he desired to call attention to before Mr. Speaker left the Chair. With regard to the three battleships which were voted last year to be built in private yards, he noticed from the Memorandum of the First Lord that they had been undertaken in Government yards. Under those circumstances he thought private yards had some reason to complain of the action of the Government. The number of shipbuilders who were qualified to build battleships was limited, and when it was announced that three battleships were to be put out to contract in one year, naturally some of those shipbuilders expected to execute part of the orders. The reason for the change appeared to be that the work in the Government yards had been got through at a greater rate than was expected, but it was rather hard that the private shipbuilding yards should suffer owing to a want of foresight on the part of the Government. He quite appreciated the argument that the change was necessary in order to keep the hands in the Government yards together, but, even so, a compromise might have been arranged whereby two of the ships might have been given out as proposed to the private yards, because it must not be lost sight of that they too had to keep their hands together. The position of the manufacturers was affected in more ways then one because these private contractors were at the same time manufacturers of armour plate. And in this regard they were entitled to expect a large share of the orders having regard to the fact that some three or four years ago pressure was brought to bear on the armour-plate manufacturers to increase their productions. Thus Sheffield manufacturers increased their production by 10,000 tons each and yet the programme of the year would not come up to a third of their capacity. He also understood that the amount of repairs given to private yards in the future would be considerably less then in the past, but he certainly hoped having regard to the pressure put on these contractors in the past that the Admiralty would strain a point in their favour in that matter. It might be so that, in these matters, the national interest came first. That was no doubt true, but was all being done in the national interest that shuold be. Were some of the old battleships such as the "Majestic" and "Royal Sovereign" class and the "Centurion" and "Barfleur" class adequately protected in armour? He understood that at modern trials the armour-piercing shells were such as to prove that the armour of those vessels was far from adequate. There were other classes of ships which needed not only re-armouring but re-arming as well. With regard to the general question as to whether the strength of the Navy was the two-Power standard, he could only say that according to the figures in *Brasseys Annual* we had hardly reached that standard. According to that work the combined force of France and Germany were seventy-seven as against sixty-two. Of course all these calculations were difficult to harmonise, but so far as the mere statement as to the numbers was concerned, he believed that those figures were fairly accurate. So far as he was concerned the criticism he would make was not that the present Estimates were too large but rather that they were too small. He quite admitted that he did not approach this matter with an entirely unbiassed view, but if his criticisms were sound his personal leanings he submitted did not affect the question.

*MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had taken exception to the fact that certain battleships that were to have been built by contract had been placed in Government yards. It must necessarily be the policy of the Government to give work to its own yards when they were short of employment. There was no doubt the Government cut the matter too fine last year with regard to the matter of laying down new ships. It was pointed out then that unless they did lay down some ships in their own yards there would either be a large discharge or other work would have to be found. At the moment they appeared to have had the belief there was ample work, but it turned out differently, and of course they were right in seeing that their own yards, which would have no other opportunity of getting work like private yards, were duly employed. With regard to the "Prince of Wales" battleship, he had asked whether it was the fact that one of the armour plates had developed serious defects, and the answer was that the defects were not as serious as he suggested. His information was to the effect that the fissure was so serious that a man was able to put his finger in, and that pieces 22 inches in length, 6 inches wide and three-eighths of an inch in thickness had blown off. There was something chemically wrong with these plates. He knew the Admiralty had investigated this matter, and no doubt a report had been made. It would be of great interest to the House to have an explanation from his hon. friend as to the cause of this serious defect. He wanted to know what steps the Admiralty had taken with the contractor to compel him to make good not only the plates themselves but the loss that might be occasioned to the Admiralty. They had been told that the Admiralty had decided to take steps to cease the manufacture of certain commodities that were supplied to the Fleet by way of victualling, that they had decided to discontinue the manufacture of flour, oatmeal, etc., but they had decided to continue the manufacture of biscuit and cocoa. With regard to cocoa he had nothing to say, but with regard to biscuit he made a definite statement that the Admiralty were producing in their own factories biscuits at a cost of 40 per cent. more than they could be obtained in the open market. The hon. Gentleman shook his head, but that was his assertion after examination and inquiry.

For the first time for twenty years in these Estimates there was a notification by the Admiralty that all the money voted last year would have been spent and earned by the contractors and the Government yards before the end of the financial year. For ten years they had been met every year with the fact that the money voted during the preceding year had not been spent. There had been all sorts of explanations of this. As regarded contract-built ships, the Admiralty had adopted the system he was the first to suggest, that ships built by private firms should be absolutely completed there and not brought round to the Government yards to be overhauled, which resulted in time and money being spent on them there. It was encouraging to find the good business results the Admiralty had achieved from having the ships thoroughly completed in the contractors' yards. He had advocated in past years that ships built by contract and requiring repairs should be sent back to the contractor who built them. It must be obvious there was an advantage in that. The contractor knew all about his ship and he naturally took an interest in it. He believed if that system were adopted as far as possible they would get better work, a longer life to the ship, and that there would be an economy to the State. Another point was that the Admiralty ought to take some further action to get an estimate of the cost of repairs before they proceeded to put the ships into the hands of the contractors for repairs. He was certain the present system was most extravagant. He never would believe it was not possible to get an approximate estimate in advance.

He was glad to notice in the First Lord's statement that gunnery continued steadily to improve. He thought that was mainly due to the Parliamentary and Press discussion which had taken place. The primary object of the Fleet was to shoot well, and the result of the encouragement given by the Admiralty to the men was that there was a keen interest not only in the Navy, but through the nation in the results of the target practice and rapid firing and hitting. It would be of interest to know what ships shot badly, and he did not see the objection to publishing the results in the fullest possible detail. We got to know the records of the shooting of other nations, and if we advertised the fact that ours was the best shooting nation in the world it was not likely to do us any harm. He agreed that the practice should be in accordance with the conditions prevailing in time of war; it was in that direction we ought to excel. Every endeavour ought to be made to improve the material the men had to use, and especially was that the case in the matter of sighting. Had the Admiralty given that attention to this matter of the sighting of the guns which its importance deserved? What were the facts in connection with the "Centurion"? That ship returned from the China Station last year for the purpose of a thorough overhaul and refit. She was just on the point of being sent back to the China Station when rumours began to be circulated that the sighting of her 10-in. guns was imperfect. The Admiralty must take a great amount of responsibility in this matter; they could not pretend that they were in ignorance. It was generally known that the Gunnery School at Whale Island made representations on the point. Everybody knew, also, that when a ship came home to refit, the captain had the responsibility of making a full report with a full list of all requirements necessary to make his ship up-to-date and efficient. Did the captain fail in that respect? Undoubtedly not. The captain made representations to the Admiralty that the sighting was defective, and yet this ship had gone away to China with its gun sighting defective.

Mr. PRETYMAN was understood to dissent.

*__Mr. KEARLEY__ said the sighting was admittedly imperfect at any rate. Lord

Selborne the other day gave some explanation as to what happened. In the first place, he said that, as part of the refit a new sighting installation had been entrusted to the Messrs. Armstrong; and in the second place, that it could not be completed owing to want of time. That appeared to be very plausible on the surface; but either the Admiralty did not act on the information supplied by the captain at the earliest possible moment, in which event they were dilatory in an important case of sighting ten-inch guns, in which there ought to have been no delay; or, if the Admiralty said they had not been dilatory, they asked the House to believe that the Messrs. Armstrong, one of the greatest shipbuilding firms in the world, with an unlimited number of hands, and all other facilities at their command, were not capable of installing a new and satisfactory system of sighting in the "Centurion" in a period of four months.

MR. PRETYMAN was understood to say that that was so.

*MR. KEARLEY said that if it were so it seemed to him astounding. This was so important a matter that the Admiralty would do well at once to appoint a Committee of Inquiry composed of the best gunnery experts, and the best shipbuilders in the country. He did not believe that it was impossible to get a proper sighting equipment installed in the four months the ship was at home. The Admiralty were not free from responsibility because, when the Messrs. Armstrong had failed, they had not hesitated to send this ship back to her station in a defective state. His hon. friend might reply that the "Centurion" was efficient with the old sighting apparatus; but everybody knew that the old system of sighting was quite out of date, and knocked off at least 50 per cent. of efficiency as regarded accuracy and rapidity of firing, compared with the system installed in ships built within the last two or there years. It seemed to him strange that the Admiralty should have been in such a desperate hurry to send the ship back to the China Station with the old sighting. The "Centurion" was not an isolated case. He was told that there were many ships in the Navy at the present moment with sighting equipment which was seriously defective. He had only one other word to say on the subject of gunnery. He had urged over and over again that the Admiralty ought to give further encouragement to the men to stimulate them in shooting. He suggested that larger prizes should be given for accurate and rapid shooting. The best man in the Navy secured for the best shooting of a 12-in. gun, which fired an 800lb. shot, the magnificent sum, under the improved conditions of payment, of £3, accompanied by a silver medal. A man went to Bisley and fired an ounce bullet at a target and received £250 in money and a gold medal. The Admiralty seemed to overlook the fact that what honour was to the officer, money was to the men. It was a question of bread and butter to them. He had come in contact with a great number of men of the lower deck, and they were all in favour of large money inducements being given to the very best shooting men. There should be a naval Bisley every year, although he knew that certain objections might be stated against it—that there were variations in weather and light in different parts of the world, and that therefore it was impossible that the competitions could be carried out under fairly similar conditions. But he was told that whenever prize firing was engaged in, the state of the weather must be such that an open boat could be lowered and lay to so as to be able, as required, to make the necessary repairs to the target, and to his mind that fact showed that the competition could be carried on under fairly similar conditions.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley) said he wished to identify himself with the compliment which had been paid to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty on the very lucid, although lengthy, statement he had made on the Navy Estimates. The distinguishing feature of the Estimates was the large sum of money required. The contrast between past years and the present was so marked that to-day we had a peace Estimate larger than any presented in time of war. That was a very remarkable circumstance, even more remarkable than the fact that these Estimates were £2,500,000 larger than those of last year. The two questions which the country would ask upon such enormous Estimates were—first, was this vast expenditure necessary; and second, was the country getting value for the money? He thought, and especially after the very specific statement made by the right hon. Gentleman in the responsible position of Secretary of State for War, that there was nothing provocative in the Estimates as they stood, nothing to challenge a response by any foreign Power. The country had recently heard with comparative equanimity of the state of appalling inefficiency of the Army because it was generally fully persuaded that the Navy was not only large but also efficient. The two-Power standard had been recognised as necessary even by the hon. Member for Denbigh. But, in making this comparison, American as well as German preparations could not altogether be neglected. It is true that the possibility of war with America was quite remote; he hoped that it was practically non-existent; but however friendly a Power might be, it was our duty to take into account all the naval preparations of that Power, which he noticed proposed to spend £100,000 on experiments with submarines. Reference had been made by the Secretary to the Admiralty to the Memorandum of the First Lord of the Admiralty. That was a very remarkable document, for there was scarcely a topic connected with naval preparations that was not dealt with in it in an exhaustive manner. In regard to the Chilian battleships, the hon. Member for Cardiff had said with characteristic modesty that these ships, designed by himself, were the best at the present time in the British Navy. He could hardly go so far as that, but he held that, considering their limited displacement and tonnage, there were no battleships superior to them, and their acquisition by the Admiralty was one on which the Board might be congratulated. If the rumours as to the circumstances surrounding that acquisition were correct, then the whole country owed a deep debt of gratitude to Lord Selborne for the personal steps which he took to secure these vessels at a moment of emergency, when they might have otherwise been lost to the service of Great Britain, and perhaps one day have been ranged against us.

Sir Fortescue Flannery.

The hon. Member for Devonport had referred to the manner in which criticisms in the House had been accepted by the Admiralty. He ventured to say that the speech of the Secretary to the Admiralty and the Memorandum of the First Lord teemed with proofs of the success of criticisms in this House of naval details. He remembered that the criticisms of the late Sir W. Allan and other friends had been accepted by the Admiralty, and were now doing good and useful service in naval preparations. Take the question of sea trials of the marine boilers. These were now common, and the comparative results obtained were most valuable. That was a right policy, and so long as the Admiralty adopted the testing of novelties at sea they would meet with approval from practical men in the House. He maintained that the Boiler Commission, which was at first intended to be a temporary expedient, should be made a permanent board of advice to the Admiralty. There could be nothing possibly better than that the experience of men of high standing in the mercantile marine should be at the disposal of the Admiralty. Then the increase of the Navy Intelligence Department was also an improvement that had been the result of long and frequent debate and suggestion in this House. The Admiralty were moving in a right direction when they appointed naval attachés in all the great European capitals who would obtain intelligence regarding all foreign Navies. The drastic regulations for the compulsory retirement of captains was the result of representations in this House. The result of these regulations would be to obtain not only a large reserve of admirals, rear-admirals and captains, but also to have the rear-admirals very much longer than they had ever been before, capable of taking command in the years when their vigour was at its best, and their experience sufficiently matured. That improvement had been carried out without any violent change of system or anything leading to injustice to individuals. It was also very satisfactory to find that the system of recruiting and training younger officers was working out in a way which the Admiralty considered satisfactory. "Water babies," as they were called, were entered now in considerable numbers, and there was every expectation on the part of those who had practical knowledge of the subject that the system would work satisfactorily. He had no doubt that experience would show that, even if changes in detail were necessary, the system was on the whole the right one for providing officers for the Fleet. He expressed approval of the training of boys in gunnery and other matters instead of masts, yards, and spars, there being no object to be gained by training young bluejackets in the obsolete system of navigation by sailing. Now they were really taught, as the officers were taught, what was necessary for practical use. The increase of the *personnel* was stated to be 4,000, but it was really more, because 1,240 boys had been done away with and men substituted. He did not know how the Admiralty proposed to provide for the future training of bluejackets when so large a proportion of boys had been abolished, but perhaps the Secretary to the Admiralty would be able to give an explanation. It might be that the great increase in the Reserve made it unnecessary to train so many boys, and that, therefore, the *personnel* of the Fleet could be kept more efficient.

Another matter of the utmost importance was the association of the Colonies and the colonial sailor-men with the British Fleet. That was clearly at work, according to the statement of the First Lord, both in Australia and New Zealand, where the Colonial Parliaments had accepted the overtures of the mother country, but he noticed with regret that there was no mention of Newfoundland, which had a large reserve of sailors who might be utilised in the same way. Reference had been made to the rapid rate of construction in the dockyards. Credit must also be given to the improved system of organisation in the dockyards which had been introduced by the present Director of Naval Dockyards, Sir James Williamson. Whatever the cause it was satisfactory to find that the great reform urged upon the Admiralty over and over again of allowing private contractors to finish their ships in preference to sending them to the dockyards to be changed and pulled to pieces, was not only working well with regard to the ships built by contract, but also because it left the dockyards to their own proper work of building their own ships. The Leader of the Opposition had expressed the opinion that the £2,500,000 increase in the Estimates ought not to be associated with any idea that the Budget would not be a favourable one. What had the Budget to do with the safety of the country? He believed that the Estimates, large as they were, were absolutely necessary, and would be regarded by the country as reasonable in all the circumstances of the case.

*MR. LOUGH said he could not help thinking that the compliments which the hon. Member for the Shipley Division had paid to the present Board of Admiralty, and also to past Boards, and some of the detailed criticism, might have been reserved for the Committee stage on the Estimates. At this particular stage hon. Members who did not represent dockyard constituencies, or any trade interest, might be given the opportunity of dealing with the question of the Navy from the standpoint of the country. The hon. Member for Tynemouth quoted something which he himself said twelve months ago when the Estimates were under discussion. The hon. Member repeated what he said with fair accuracy, but he entirely lost the point of his argument. What he did a year ago was to point out that between 1860 and 1885 there was no rise practically in the Navy Estimates, though these twenty-five years represented the period of the greatest commercial progress this country had ever seen. We did not add £1,000,000 to the cost of the Navy during that time. He pointed out further that in the succeeding period we had doubled, trebled, and quadrupled the cost of the Navy, though our commerce had not increased more than £1 per head. His point was that a strong Navy did not necessarily give us good commercial results. The Secretary to the Admiralty had stated that afternoon that the safety of our commerce depended entirely on the Navy in time of war. He would remind the House that we passed through critical times in the twenty-five years to which he had alluded, but our commerce flourished all the time. There was the American Civil War accompanied by circumstances of great irritation against this country, and the great conflict between France and Germany, but our trade flourished all the time. Why was the country so prosperous? It was because there were gentlemen on the Treasury Bench who did not suggest the expenditure of another £1,000,000 on the Navy, and who appreciated that the real source of successful commerce was national wealth and well being. His hon. friend the Member for the Shipley Division asked what the Budget had to do with the matter if the safety of the country was at stake. But was safety secured by this huge expenditure? He failed to see how such a policy could be described as safe, if the country was being bled white by a reckless Government which asked for more than there was any necessity for. The House was greatly indebted to the hon. Member for Dundee for pointing out definitely what the Estimate exactly meant. The hon. Member put it moderately when he stated the sum was £42,000,000. He did not think there had ever been a period in the history of the country when such a huge payment could be so ill afforded as at present. The House would not realise what all this meant unless they tried to bring home to their minds the other burdens of the people at the present time. The whole burden estimated for by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Imperial purposes was £144,000,000, but this great sum did not include expenditure on capital account, so that the total amount of expenditure was £155,000,000. That was only one part of the burden that rested upon the people. He was informed that the burden of the rates amounted to £105,000,000 in 1902.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must remember that at present he can only discuss questions relating to the Navy Estimates.

Mr. LOUGH said he would obey that ruling. He only wished to point out in a sentence that the total expenditure of the country was £260,000,000. He presumed he would be allowed to say that any proposal to increase this large amount was a serious responsibility for any Government to undertake. The Government were totally ignorant of the feeling of the country with regard to this matter. [Cries of "Oh."] He was arguing that point. Hon. Members who had backed up this Government in all their extravagance might feel that the nation was perfectly satisfied with any burden put upon it. But surely he was at liberty to take another view! The Government had displayed no appreciation of the feeling of the country with regard to the serious burdens thrown upon it at the present time. Every man out of doors expressed the same opinion. The great national securities had fallen to a point never touched before since the wars of 1815, and there was every indication in the commercial world of great depression. Wages had decreased, the savings in savings banks had diminished, and simultaneously the price of bread and other great articles of consumption were going up. All this was owing to the vast expenditure of the Government, of which the Navy Estimates formed the largest item. The people of this country were suffering in a hundred ways of which hon. Members opposite did not appear to have the slightest knowledge. Yet the Government took no account of those things and were steadily increasing the expenditure. The state of Ireland was perfectly shocking, the agricultural depression was particularly severe there. The wet season had affected all the crops on which the subsistence of the people depended, and in view of that surely the Government might have postponed many increased demands until they were in a better position to meet them.

The explanations given by the Government on this occasion had been marked by an entirely novel feature. They had now adopted a new standard of naval power different from the two-Power standard. For three or four years past hon. Members had unsuccessfully tried to elicit from the Government what standard they were aiming at, but had never been able to get any candid admissions. Now the cat had been let out of the bag, and they had had a statement of extreme significance. The two-Power standard was no longer to be applied to the general expenditure on the Navy—it was only to apply to battleships, and not to cruisers, torpedo boats, and other vessels. This was a most important departure. The Secretary to the Admiralty had indistinctly alluded to the new standard as a sort of insurance on our commerce. He wanted to know what the rate of insurance was, and was there to be any definite relation between the expenditure and the alleged increase of commerce to which attention had been drawn. They had in recent years heard members of the Navy League speak of the naval expenditure being proportionate to the whole commerce of the country. What were the views of the Government on that point? Would the Secretary to the Admiralty define the position a little more closely and tell them to what extent he proposed to go. He had stated the whole value of our commerce at £1,200,100,000, and had said that on such a vast trade we could well afford to pay insurance. He seemed to suggest that we should make the Navy strong enough to convoy our merchant ships to all parts of the world in time of war so that there could be no interference with commerce at all. That was a most absurd idea. Convoying would not be practicable at all to any considerable extent. This, at any rate, represented a startling change in their ideas as to what the strength of the Navy should be. A fundamental change was being made to the Navy standard, and the House was entitled to further explanations. In 1883 our naval expenditure represented 10·4 millions while the two greatest naval Powers on the Continent spent £14,000,000, in 1893 we spent 14·3 millions against their £18,000,000, but last year we spent 34·5 millions, while they only expended £25,000,000, so that we far exceeded their standard. These figures prove that ten and twenty years ago we had a perfectly clear idea of what the two-Power standard meant. It meant that the total expenditure of this country should be a little less than that of the two next countries with the largest navies, but during the last few years this interpretation has been entirely abandoned. How much further did the Government propose to go? What did the new standard which they had invented mean? One hon. Member had told them that it would involve the building of 160 new first class cruisers. Did the Government assent to that? Surely they ought to have a more complete definition of the new standard.

The Estimates filled him with alarm. The country was never so ill-equipped to bear so heavy a burden. He had put down an Amendment which he knew, by the Rules of the House, that he could not take the opinion of hon. Members upon. It directed attention to one particular form of extravagant expenditure—that was the expenditure on capital account in the Estimates. A Committee was appointed a year ago to deal with the question of national expenditure, and it made a Report showing how the growth of the expenditure on capital account had increased from £40,000 in 1883 to 9·4 millions in the current year. This constituted one of the most serious sources of extravagance in the administration of the affairs of the country. Expenditure on capital account meant that instead of paying for the service of the year out of the taxes of the year according to old financial traditions, recourse was had to borrowing. He might mention that in connection with the Navy there was no expenditure on capital account in 1883, but in 1893 1·4 millions was spent on that account and this year the total was 4·1 millions. That was an extraordinary and alarming growth, and unfortunately every public Department was going on the same lines, even the Post Office had spent £600,000 on capital account. This growth of expenditure was creating difficulties; the borrowing was coming home to roost; the interest was becoming heavy, and the Government were feeling the difficulties of a system under which there could be no clear statement of annual expenditure, and economical finance was prejudiced. Let the Secretary to the Admiralty inaugurate his period of office by putting a check on this bad system of borrowing money for naval work so that if the nation were extravagant it might at least pay its way.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS said the hon. Member for West Islington had stated that the people of this country were averse to expenditure on the

Navy. If he meant it as a matter on which he was prepared to take the decision of the country, he ventured to say that any Member on the Government side of the House, if the issue of an election were limited to that, was, to use a vulgarism "prepared to take him on." However much the country and House disliked large figures, they approached this matter of the Navy as one of necessity, and as one that had to be faced. There was one matter which he desired to suggest to the Secretary to the Admiralty. It was a matter of general importance in their naval system, and that was the use of electricity on ships of war. Last summer he was on board one of His Majesty's ships of war, and was struck by the absence of electric appliances. There was no telephone aboard, and during hot weather the only cooling apparatus was a system of pumping of air by steam engines, which made it hot air. The same afternoon he went on board an American flag-ship, and the whole vessel was supplied with electric appliances and apparatus, which made it very cool and very agreeable. It might be that in our Navy electricity was not used because it was thought to be dangerous; but perhaps the hon. Gentleman would tell him whether there was any well-considered plan upon which they acted. Another matter which he thought should be cleared up had relation to the officers of the Royal Naval Reserve. He had seen it stated in a newspaper that no less than 340 lieutenants in the Royal Naval Reserve had absolutely no qualifications for that rank beyond the fact that they had done their drills on one of the stationary drill ships. He did not make that statement with any intention to throw aspersions on the efficiency of the officers; but he mentioned it because it had been stated in a public newspaper, and he thought it desirable that some notice should be taken of it in the House. One of the most important matters, he apprehended, in the supply of their naval needs was the question of the supply of stokers. It was satisfactory to revert to the Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty that, as far as the Royal Fleet Reserve went, it was certain that the whole number of 625 stokers would have been enlisted before the end of the present financial year. The question of stokers was a most important one, and it was satisfactory to know that the calculations of the Government were working out so well.

Of late years many Members had adversely criticised the shooting in the Navy, and it became a duty, therefore, as well as a pleasure, to make public acknowledgment of the improvement that had taken place. He thought praise was due to Lord Charles Beresford for what he had achieved in his own squadron, and as far as he was able to judge a similar improvement was noticeable in the Mediterranean Fleet and throughout the Navy generally. Incidentally he thought they should recognise a very creditable piece of seamanship recorded last autumn in the squadron under the command of Lord Charles Beresford in the case of His Majesty's ship "Prince George." He saw that vessel in dock, and even a landsman could recognise the imminent peril in which the ship was placed and appreciate the extraordinary state of efficiency in which the crew must have been to have avoided disaster. He thought Parliament ought to be ready to recognise such obvious efficiency. Another point in regard to which he was not so sure they might rest contented was in the matter of guns. This question was raised last year principally in connection with the "County" class of cruisers. In the newer ships of that class bigger guns had been put in, but, as he read the present Minute, the secondary armament of our newest battleships was not as good, or as big, or as efficient as that which was being put in the newest battleships of the German Navy. In the new German ships, of which one was laid down last year and two were to be laid down this year, the smallest calibre of gun, 6·7, had been increased to 8·2, whereas in our "King Edward" class beyond our 9-in. guns we had nothing but 6-in. He did not say this was wrong, but he thought it would be satisfactory if the Secretary to the Admiralty would give the House some information and tell them whether the Admiralty were satisfied that the requirements of the situation were being met. The Member for Shipley was inclined to find fault with the dockyard Members for raising dockyard questions. If he were a dockyard Member he would have more sympathy with them.

He must be permitted to refer to one point which was in the Memorandum. The scale of pensions for the widows of seamen killed or drowned on duty had been raised and now corresponded to that for which provision was made from naval funds for widows of men killed in warlike operations. He did not propose to enlarge on that question now as he did last year. Without going into the matter he desired to ask, as had often been done before, whether the Admiralty had any intention of taking over the whole of this charge. Reference had been made to the dockyard question. There were many points which it seemed to be his duty to bring before the House, but for obvious reasons he could not do so. He suggested that what had been done in previous years should again be done, viz., that there should be a private conference between the representatives of the Admiralty and the Members particularly concerned. The points at issue could then be threshed out more effectively than in open debate, and the time and attention of the House generally would not be taken up by these matters of purely Departmental concern.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) thought it was time to ask when this gigantic expenditure was going to cease. About ten years ago the Navy Estimates were £19,000,000; they were now £36,000,000. He contended that the rate of increase was greater than was required to keep up to the two-Power standard. It had been said that it was difficult for England to bear the heavy burden of taxation necessitated by the enormous expenditure, but the argument applied with ten-fold force to Ireland, it being a purely agricultural country, and having to bear a share of the burden much greater than her proper proportion. England and her colonies were greatly interested in the protection of their commerce, but Ireland had no commerce to protect, and she received absolutely no benefit from all this expenditure. Large sums out of the money voted for the Navy were expended at Woolwich, Portsmouth, and similar places, but Ireland received practically nothing. In this as in all other respects she was treated in the most niggardly and cheeseparing way. For years her representatives had asked for a couple of gunboats for the protection of her fisheries, and, although such boats had been provided for the Scotch fisheries, Ireland had had to go without, so far as the Admiralty were concerned, and the cost of patrolling the coasts had had to be borne by the Irish Fisheries Board. It was probably not much use calling attention to particular cases, but as an illustration of the manner in which Ireland was treated by the Admiralty he would refer to one instance. At Tramore, in county Waterford, a large number of men had joined the Royal Naval Reserve. They were physically a fine body of men, and the Admiralty had been asked again and again to give the local authority some little assistance in the construction of a pier to facilitate landing and so on. The present Secretary of State for War, after inquiring into the matter, said the work was not absolutely necessary. Works, without being absolutely necessary, were often highly desirable, and even from the naval point of view the construction of this pier would have resulted in much good to the service in which the Admiralty were interested. This was a small matter from an Imperial point of view, but it was of considerable importance to the people concerned, and it was an exemplification of the beggarly way in which Ireland was treated in connection with the naval expenditure. Much was not asked, but it was desired that local effort should be supplemented, and doubtless, if the pier was constructed, the Admiralty would not hesitate to take advantage of the work towards the construction of which they had not had the decency to contribute.

*MR. PRETYMAN said it was only by leave of the House he could again speak, but it would probably be to the general convenience that he should answer certain Questions which had been addressed to him. He assured the hon. Member for East Waterford that it was the desire of the Admiralty to spend proportionally as much money in Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom so far as the interests of the Navy would allow. The Admiralty fully sympathised with the attitude taken up by the hon. Member with regard to the pier at Tramore and the provision of a gunboat for the protection of fisheries, but such matters could not be dealt with out of naval funds. In no case did the Admiralty expend money on the construction of private piers. If, however, piers were constructed in private or public harbours by private money there were occasions when the Admiralty paid for the use of them, and in that way assisted the local authorities. Nor did the Admiralty supply boats for the protection of fisheries within the three-mile limit. That was the duty of the Fisheries Board, to whom hon. Members should direct their application. As to the expenditure of Navy funds on construction and repairs, a considerable sum was spent in the North of Ireland, and a not inconsiderable amount at Haulbowline, while during the past year three ships had been sent to the Channel Docks situated in the neighbourhood of Cork.

With regard to the complaint that three new ships had been laid down in dockyards instead of in private yards, it was of course the fact that the armour would be constructed by private firms whether the ships were constructed in the Government yards or in private yards. The total of new construction for 1904-5 sent to private yards would exceed that of the past year by something like £1,000,000, so that private yards might expect to obtain a full share of the work. The hon. Member for Devonport had referred to two matters—the armour-plate of the "Prince of Wales" and the sighting of the "Centurion's" guns. The armour-plate of the "Prince of Wales" was a 12-inch plate, and at present there was a crack and scaling of the surface of the plate to the depth of ⅜-inch. It was impossible to doctor a plate, so that either the plate must remain *in situ* or be removed altogether and be replaced, and as the latter was a very expensive business involving great delay in the completion of the vessel, it ought not to be undertaken unless it was absolutely necessary. At present the defects did not justify the removal of the plate, but if they developed so as to endanger the security of the guns, action would be taken and the contractors would be held responsible. The cause of the defect was obscure, as the plate had been manufactured by the processes which had been uniformly successful in other cases. As to the "Centurion's" sights, these were turret sights attached to the mountings and not to the guns. The point of greatest importance in a sight was that it should be accurately attached, and that was where the "Centurion's" sights had always been defective, owing not to any defect in the sight itself, but to the character of the gun-mounting, which was now obsolete. In these particular mountings the attachment had to run in and out with the gun, with the result that the attachment was extraordinarily difficult and it had never been thoroughly satisfactory. The "Centurion," however, made a very fair average practice on her two commissions; but on her return, the Admiralty, instead of neglecting the question, did what was possible to repair the defects. Messrs. Armstrong were commissioned to devise a satisfactory attachment for this particular mounting. After a few months Armstrongs, with the assistance and advice of the gunnery experts of the Admiralty, produced an attachment which was an improvement on the old one, with which fair shooting had previously been made. That was the attachment with which with the "Centurion" had gone out, but it was not perfect; and he could not hold out hope that it would be possible to make an absolutely perfect attachment for that form of mounting. As very fair shooting was made with the old attachment and this was a better one, he did not think there was any very serious defect to be apprehended. The attachment not being absolutely perfect required that in laying the gun the last motion should be one of elevation. It, of course, needed a little handling on the part of the men; but the practice made with the gun was little inferior to that made with the other guns. The Admiralty had done all they could in the particular circumstances of the case, and Armstrongs had been asked to make a further attempt to secure a better attachment to the gun.

In reply to the question put by the hon. Member for the Shipley division, the reduction in the number of boys to be entered next year was because the rate of increase in men for the *personnel* of the Navy would now be reduced. They now entered boys only to make good the ordinary wastage, and to some extent the reduction had become possible owing to the strengthening of the Reserves.

Hon. Members who criticised the Admiralty for the size of the Estimates approached the question solely from a financial point of view. The hon. Member for West Islington practically admitted that that was the only point of view from which he had attempted to consider or to study this question. He assured the hon. Member that had he approached the question not only from the financial, but also from the naval side as well, and had he devoted the same study to the naval side, he believed he would have taken the same view as the Admiralty that although the increases were large, not one of them was unnecessary. Although there had been much criticism which was fully justified from a purely financial standpoint, he wished to remind the House that that was not the only standpoint, and it was not the one from which the Admiralty looked at these Estimates. From no single hon. Member who had addressed the House on these Estimates had they received any suggestion by which any particular economy could be effected.

MR. LOUGH: Make a reduction of £5,000,000.

*MR. PRETYMAN said there were only two ways in which a large economy could be carried out First, if a responsible Government were, under the authority of the country, to say that the two-Power standard should no longer be adopted. But he believed that if there was one thing which the country was determined upon it was that the Navy should be adequate to the Navies of any other two Powers. If this country were to be engaged in a struggle for existence and the Navy was not prepared, then the country would bitterly rue any false economy. If it were true that they were not so prosperous as about four or five years ago, he did not see any adequate reason why the Navy Estimates should be reduced. To cut down the Navy Estimates now would be doing something on the same principle as if a large commercial firm were to say, "We have had a bad year, and we will not pay our fire insurance this year." Was it conceivable that any business could be conducted on those principles?

MR. LOUGH: I don't believe in fire insurance.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that if the hon. Member's premises were burnt down, he thought he would be in favour of fire insurance after that.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester) asked if a saving could not be effected in regard to the ships which would have to be laid aside in the event of war and their crews transferred.

*MR. PRETYMAN admitted that there were still a certain number of sloops which would be perfectly useless in time of war; but those ships were doing duty absolutely necessary in time of peace, though it might be possible at some future period to design vessels which would serve some purpose in war better than the sloops referred to could. The second method of reducing expenditure to which he had referred would be if a responsible Government should be able to go to the country and say that their expert advisers informed them that we could maintain the two-Power standard with fewer ships and less equipment. He did not believe the country would ever accept any amateur opinion upon the point. The country itself and the House were fully competent to judge whether or not the two-Power standard was sufficient, and that was a question easily understood.

MR. LOUGH: But you are going entirely beyond the two-Power standard.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he did not admit that we were now going beyond the two-Power standard. He did not think the country would ever accept any opinion, as to what was or what was not sufficient in regard to the strength of the Navy, unless it was backed up by the opinion of the experts at the Admiralty. The hon. Member for Portsmouth had asked a Question about the secondary armaments of the battleships of the "King Edward VII." class, which were equipped with 6-inch guns, four 12-inch guns, and four 9·2 guns. His hon. friend was of the opinion that the Admiralty might put in a larger number of 6-inch guns. The 6-inch guns which were being mounted in the ships of the "King Edward VII." class were a very powerful gun, and enormously superior to the 6-inch gun at present in the service, and it would not be possible to replace them with 7·5 guns without a complete re-design of the ships. With regard to the officers of the Royal Naval Reserve, a very large proportion of them were now going through training, and many of them had already received it. There were 1,550 officers of the Royal Naval Reserve all told. He thought he had now dealt with all the principal Questions which had been raised in the debate, but if any minor points had been omitted he hoped the House would allow him to reply to them in Committee.

MR. O'MARA said he wished to thank the Secretary to the Admiralty for the fulness with which he had answered the various Questions which had been put to him. He wished, however, to say that to those representing Ireland those answers were not satisfactory, more particularly in regard to the amount of money spent. He thought if Ireland returned Conservatives and Liberals to the House of Commons more money out of the Naval Estimates would be spent in Ireland. With regard to the fisheries off the coast of Ireland, he understood the hon. Member to promise that outside of the three-mile limit the fisheries would be carefully guarded. He inferred that that was the reply which had been given them, and he understood that in future a couple of gunboats would be put there to protect the Irish fisheries outside the three-mile limit. The hon. Member representing the Admiralty had stated that they were all anxious for economy, and that the English Members had not suggested any means of effecting economy in the Navy Estimate, in fact they had said that they were anxious to have a strong Navy. He did not care whether they had a strong or a weak Navy, but he thought an easy way for economising would be to adopt the policy suggested to the Russian Government by Lord Salisbury in regard to the building of battleships. Some of the Russian battleships had been disabled in Port Arthur, and therefore he did not see why this country should go on building more battleships at the present time Although two Chilian battleships had been bought, the naval programme had only been reduced by one battleship. He suggested to the Secretary to the Admiralty, in these very difficult times, when they were not advancing in prosperity or anything else, and when Ireland was suffering from very severe agricultural depression that £1,000,000 saving upon a battleship would be very acceptable both to this country and to Ireland. He would therefore suggest that the Admiralty should only put two battleships down next year instead of three.

They had heard a lot about the Colonies during the recess, and they had been told that the colonial trade could only be carried on in time of war with the help of the Navy. The hon. Gentleman opposite had told them that the Navy was a sort of fire insurance upon their trade and he was quite right. When he looked at this question from the point of view of Ireland, he could not help asking where was the oversea trade of Ireland? Foreign ships that came to Ireland were very few indeed and the oversea trade was very small, and for Ireland to pay £2,000,000, which was her proportion of the expenses of the Navy every year, was an insurance from Ireland which was an exceedingly large amount. In Canada the population was pretty nearly double what it was in Ireland [Cries of "No, no."] There were over

6,000,000 people in Canada, and over 4,000,000 in Ireland. He understood that an application had been made to Canada for a contribution towards the Navy and that it had been refused. He would like the Secretary to the Admiralty to state if that was the case. He thought Canada ought to contribute something towards this fire insurance upon her trade, but Canada he understood had absolutely refused to share any of the responsibilities of Empire. Canada claimed all the advantages of Imperialism, but when they were asked to subscribe a few pounds to the Navy, towards the cost of which the people of Ireland had to put theirs hands deeply into their pockets, they refused to give a single cent. Why had Australia given an increased subvention to the Navy? Was it purely for the love of the mother country? Australia had agreed to pay £200,000 a year in future towards the Navy Estimates, but for this she got a *quid pro quo* in the sending of extra vessels to guard her fisheries. An agreement had just been concluded with Australia under which she would get eight cruisers permanently in Australian waters for the protection of her trade for the payment of £200,000, a sum which would not build a single third-class cruiser. He congratulated Australia upon her astute move, for the Imperialism she had displayed was a very good business asset. The Imperialism which Ireland had got cost them £2,000,000 per annum and they could not get even a torpedo boat or a submarine boat to look after their fisheries. Cape Colony contributed £50,000 and Natal £35,000 towards the Royal Navy, but did any hon. Member believe that this money had been subscribed without those Colonies seeing that they got a *quid pro quo* in return? He thought the business-like qualities of their fellow subjects in those Colonies who had made those good bargains, were to be highly recommended. But what good did that do to Ireland where they shared not the honours of Imperialism, but only in paying the taxes. The people of Ireland every year were getting poorer and poorer, and population was decreasing, and he should be a very unworthy representative of an Irish constituency if he did not protest and vote against this enormous increase in the Navy Estimates.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said the hon. Member who had just spoken was under a misapprehension as to Scotland being better off than Ireland in regard to the protection of her fisheries. The patrolling done off the coast of Scotland was done by three boats, not of a very first-class character, which were paid for by the Fishery Board.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I am afraid in that case the subject will not be relevant to the Navy Estimates.

*MR. AINSWORTH said the Secretary to the Admiralty had referred to the difficulty of finding any proper means of effecting economy in the Navy Estimates. The rule seemed to be that, as far as battleships were concerned, this country was bound to have as many as any other two Powers put together and as many cruisers as they might consider necessary in order to guard our commerce. When they got upon commercial questions their ideas were naturally drawn to other topics. Take for instance the trade of America. Supposing that trade was doubled—was that any reason why the number of cruisers should be increased. He contended that so long as we had free imports it would be to the interest of other nations to protect our commerce, and that therefore it was not necessary for us to spend these vast sums on our Navy. The Secretary to the Admiralty had drawn an analogy between a business firm insuring against fire and the Navy Estimates, but he should like to remind the hon. Member that in business no fire insurance company would allow a man to insure his property above its proper value. He wished to know whether in the future there was any possibility of the Secretary to the Admiralty realising that he was proposing now to spend more than he would get. If he might follow out the analogy of fire insurance there was one way of lessening the amount paid to an insurance company, and that was to provide against the risk of fire in other ways. If they did that they would find that the fire insurance company would not ask so high a premium as they had done before. He thought the Motion which had been moved would put it into the power of the Admiralty to decrease the risk without increasing the cost to the country.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) said the Secretary to the Admiralty had referred them to the Board of Agriculture in regard to the use of a gunboat. If the Board of Agriculture applied for the use of a gunboat would the Secretary to the Admiralty give a guarantee that the application would be acceded to in order that Irish fisheries might be properly protected?

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said he should like it made clear whether Canada did or did not contribute to the Navy. He understood that the reason given by Canada for not contributing to the Navy was that she was a Home Rule governing Colony, and that the Canadian Government insisted upon spending money for this purpose themselves.

Mr. PRETYMAN said the answer to that Question would be that Canada was not represented in this House. With regard to the Question put by the hon. Member for North Kerry he could not give any such undertaking. What he had said was that it was the duty of the Board of Agriculture to provide for the protection of the fisheries of Ireland within the three-mile limit.

Mr. FLAVIN: Where are they going to get the gunboats?

Mr. PRETYMAN: I am not aware that gunboats are required for that purpose.

Mr. FLAVIN: Then give us anything.

Mr. PRETYMAN said it was not the practice to use money voted for naval purposes for the protection of fisheries, and gunboats were not built for that purpose.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he wished to correct the Secretary to the Admiralty upon a mere historic point. The hon. Member had made the excuse that Canada did not contribute to the Navy because she was not represented in the Imperial Parliament.

Mr. PRETYMAN: No, I was asked a specific Question, and I gave a specific answer.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said that was the hon. Member's specific excuse to a specific statement. He reminded the House that when Ireland had an Irish

Parliament, the first thing they did was to make a very large contribution towards the Imperial Navy which was intended to protect Irish trade, but Ireland had not got any trade now.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he wished to give the Secretary to the Admiralty notice that in Committee he would take every opportunity of calling attention to the monstrously absurd situation with respect to the Colonies. It was too ridiculous to say that these immense communities, many of them extremely wealthy, should be merely called upon to pay what, in view of the Estimates generally, was a paltry sum, while the people of Ireland and Great Britain were obliged to pay millions. He would suggest in Committee that some attempt should be made to alter this. It was perfect nonsense to talk about thinking and speaking Imperially while they were allowing the Colonies to escape with a perfectly ridiculous contribution. They had had a mission to South Africa, and perhaps the same statesman would be willing to undertake a similar mission to Australia with the idea of inducing the people there to help the mother country by putting down a little hard cash, which seemed to be the last thing they were inclined to do.

The House divided:—Ayes, 144; Noes, 70. (Division List No. 31.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Arnold-Forster Rt.Hn. HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Cap. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour Rt Hn. Gerald W Leeds
Banbury, Sir Federick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw.
Cavendish V C W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain Rt.Hn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hon S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. Grant (Yorks, N.R.
Lee, Arthur H (Hants. Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Rt.Hn. Walter(Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, David J. Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt.Hn.A.Graham(Bute
Nicholson, William Graham
Peel, Hn.Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter. R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp

Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hon. M.W. (Stalybridge
Ridley, S Forde (Bethnal Green
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J E B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.- Col. Edward
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E R. (Bath)
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel, Daniel
Sheehy, David
Slack, John Bamford
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 131,100 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, including 20,656 Royal Marines."

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

NEW BILL.

COAL MINES (WEIGHING OF MINERALS).

Bill to amend the provisions of The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, which relate to the Weighing of Minerals, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Haldane, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Ure, and Mr. Fenwick.

COAL MINES (WEIGHING OF MINERALS) BILL.

"To amend the provisions of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, which relate to the Weighing of Minerals," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 8th March, and to be printed. [Bill 103.]

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 1st March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRESTON AND LYTHAM TRAMWAYS AND TRAMROAD BILL [H.L.].

Read 2a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.

Further correspondence regarding the Transvaal labour question (in continuation of [Cd. 1899], February, 1904).

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Militia Training Return for 1903.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Code of Regulations for Day Schools for 1904. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (PROVISIONAL ORDERS).

Report by the Board of Trade of their proceedings under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, and the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, Amendment Act.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899 (MOTHERWELL AND BELLSHILL RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) ORDER).

Report by the Board of Trade respecting the above Provisional Order and the objects thereof.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEWCASTLE CHAPTER (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.]

Read 3a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 1st March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

KING'S SPEECH (ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

"I have received with great satisfaction the loyal and dutiful expression of your thanks for the Speech with which I have opened the present session of Parliament."

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London Port and Docks Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Southend Water Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Clyde Navigation (Works) Bill; London and India Docks Company Bill; London and North Western Railway Bill; Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment Bill (by Order). Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PETITIONS.

BEERHOUSES.

Petition from Newport (Monmouthshire), for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Kirkdale (two); Port Talbot; St. Albans; Darwen; Newport (Fife); Stoke Newington; High Green; Sheffield; Bexley Heath; Blyton cum Wharton; Keighley; Maybole and Crosshill; London; Billingshurst; Dewsbury; Ewell; Guildford; Earlsfield; Love Clough; Lespit Hall; Crawshawbooth; Leicester; Beafood; Brierfield; Briercliffe; Middlesbrough; Bath; Aylsham; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) ACT, 1900.

Account presented, showing the Money issued from the Consolidated Fund, under the provisions of the Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900, and of the Expenditure; the Money expended and borrowed and the Securities created under the said Act, for the period ended the 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 80.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) CODE (1904).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1904, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Return showing the Expenditure from the Grant for Public Education in Scotland in the year 1903, with Statistics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORT).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDINBURGH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART.

Copy presented, of Report by the Director on the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIES (GENERAL).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the proposed adoption of a Metric System of Weights and Measures for use within the Empire [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence regarding the Transvaal Labour Question [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3123 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Carriage of Early Potatoes from Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to state what special arrangements for the carriage of early potatoes from Cahirciveen and other parts of Kerry have been made with the railway company by the Congested Districts Board and the Department of Agriculture.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The rates given by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company for new potatoes (packed) in casks, barrels, hampers, or peds, by goods train service with Kingsbridge Station, Dublin, are—From Cahirciveen 19s. 10d. a ton, Valentia Harbour 20s. 1d., Skibbereen 21s. 7d., Bantry 21s. 9d., Clonakilty 20s. 5d., Durrus Road 21s. 9d. These are the same as the rates given last year. The Department is in communication with the company with a view to obtain a continuance of similar concessions as regards the rates from some other stations, viz., Tralee, Ardfert, Miltown-Malbay, and Ennistymon. There is also a special rate in force of 18s. a ton from Clonakilty to Liverpool via steamer from Cork port. The agricultural business of the Congested Districts Board has been transferred to the new Department.

Cypher Telegrams from Macedonia.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the European assessors in Macedonia are permitted or forbidden by the Turkish authorities to send telegrams in cypher.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The foreign assessors in Macedonia are permitted to send telegrams in cypher. A temporary difficulty arose in consequence of an existing regulation that only foreign representatives in Turkey are allowed to telegraph in cypher; but the assessors were freed from all restrictions in this respect when the matter was represented to the Porte.

Landing of British Subjects in America.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will make inquiries of the British Consul at New York with respect to two British subjects, John Atkinson Wright and Robert Atkinson Wright, both of Bradford, Yorks, who landed at New York from the White Star s.s. "Cymric," on the 17th of January last, and after being detained by the American authorities on the charge of having broken the contract laws, were finally sent back to England, although they had not entered into any illegal labour contract; whether there is usually any representative from the British Consulate present to give assistance to British subjects on their landing; and, if there is not, will he inquire into the desirability of such a course.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) We have no information about this case, but His Majesty's Consul-General at New York will be instructed to furnish a report. Inquiry will at the same time be made as to the assistance given to British subjects on landing at New York.

The Pyx Chapel.

SIR BENJAMIN STONE (Birmingham, E.): To ask the hon. Member for the Chorley Division, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he will say what are the intentions of the Government as to the future use or disposal of the Pyx Chapel, now that it is no longer occupied by a Department of the Government; and is it contemplated making any alterations which will interfere with its venerable and architectural character.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The First Commissioner of Works is anxious to give effect to the assurances of his predecessor by giving the public reasonable facilities of admission to the Pyx Chapel. In order to do this it will be necessary to light the chapel: it is proposed to do so by means of plain standards with electric light, so as to avoid any injury to the ancient walls and vaulted roof. The greatest care is being taken not to make any alterations which might interfere with the architecture.

Expenditure under The Military and Naval Works Acts.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state approximately the expenditure under the Military Works Acts and Naval Works Acts in the current financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Under the Military Works Acts, the approximate expenditure for 1903–4 will be £3,600,000. Under the Naval Works Acts, as stated by the Secretary to the Admiralty yesterday in reply to the hon. Member for Exeter†, the approximate expenditure for 1903–4 will be £3,493,500.

The Budget.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to suspend the operation of the Sinking Fund in the next Budget.

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† See page 1214.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am not prepared to anticipate the Budget discussions.

Crystal Palace Gas Bill.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a Bill promoted by the Crystal Palace District Gas Company; and whether, having regard to the expense to which the local authorities were put last session in connection with a similar Bill, and to the fact that a Departmental Committee of the Board has been appointed to investigate the questions dealt with in the Bill, he proposes to object to it being allowed to proceed this session.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have intimated to the promoters that, if the Bill is proceeded with before the Departmental Committee have made their Report, I shall move an instruction to the Committee of this House to omit the clauses relating to illuminating power, power testing, and price of gas.

Closing of St. Nicholas Schools, Whitehaven.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education what steps the Board have taken in the matter of the closing of the St. Nicholas Schools, Whitehaven, on February 22nd and 23rd, by the vicar of the parish, without consultation with the other managers of the school or with some of them; and what steps the Board proposes to take to provide against a second such closing of the school.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The remedy for the action of the vicar lies with the local education authority, for it is the duty of the managers, under Section 7 (1) (a) of the Act, to carry out the instructions of the local authority as to the times for closing the school; and by failing to perform this duty the managers are endangering the continued maintenance of the school. It lies with the managers to prevent their chairman from acting without consultation with themselves. The Board are writing to the local educational authority and the managers to the above effect.

Promotion in the Telegraph Department, Glasgow.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that vacancies exist in the clerks' class and supervising classes in the Telegraph Department, Glasgow, and of the dearth of promotion, he will announce the appointments as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The postmaster's recommendations are under consideration, and my decision will, I hope, be announced in a day or two.

Service at Queensferry.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the numerous complaints as to the service given at Queensferry; and, if so, will he take steps to secure that the services are performed in accordance with statute.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I am aware of one complaint as to the adequacy of the Sunday service. The railway company maintain that they fulfil the statutory requirements. The matter is not one for the action of the Secretary for Scotland who has no title to apply to a Court of Law by whom alone the question can be decided.

Roman Catholic Prayers at Lectures for Teachers.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the national school teachers of Drimoleague, county Cork, of all denominations are attending lectures in needlework, arranged by the National Board, and held at the Convent, Skibbereen, and that at the lecture held on the 20th February last, Roman Catholic prayers were gone through in the middle of the lecture without an opportunity being given for those of a different faith to retire; and, if so, will he say if this is in accordance with the rules of the National Board and, if not, will he give instructions for the practice to be discontinued.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that a needlework conference was held on the date mentioned at the Skibbereen Convent National School. A short prayer was recited during the conference, but an intimation of the fact was given beforehand so that those present of a different faith might have an opportunity of retiring.

Officers' Furniture.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that under Army Order No. 3, of January, 1903, officers on joining were to have furniture for their quarters consisting of one bed, one table, one chest of drawers, one chair, and one washstand supplied free, he will explain why they are now to be charged £1 10s. a year for the same; and why officers who already have their own furniture are to be compelled to take the Government furniture as well at this rental charge of £1 10s. per annum, and field officers are to be compelled to take two extra chairs and a bookshelf at a further rental charge of £1 10s. a year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The hon. and gallant Member has been misinformed as to the terms of the Army Order quoted. The list of articles supplied is much larger than that stated in the Question, and the payment of about 30s. a year (1d. a day) is made in respect of ordinary depreciation and replacement; in the case of field officers the extra charge is made as complete furniture is supplied for two rooms. Officers in possession of furniture and occupying quarters furnished at the public expense can sell their own furniture to Government at a fair independent valuation. It is admitted that this may press hardly in some cases, but in view of the great object of reducing officers' expenses generally, it was held to be essential that a uniform system be adopted. It must be remembered that some extra expenses in connection with movements from station to station are saved.

Army Contracts for Stable Fitments.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can say if the contract for stable fitments has been closed yet; and, if so, will he give the names of those who tendered, together with the successful firm

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold Forster.*) The contract in question has been settled. It is not the practice of the War Department to publish the particulars asked for in the latter part of the Question, and I am afraid, therefore, that I am not in a position to give my hon. friend the information he requires.

Army Supplementary Estimates—Payment of War Compensation

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the £600,000 in the Army Supplementary Estimate is to be paid to the Governments of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, or to whom; and for what purpose is this compensation to be paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) As already explained in debate on the Army Supplementary Estimate, £300,000 of the amount is a payment to the Governments of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, and forms part of the sum of £3,000,000 which His Majesty's Government agreed should be paid on the understanding that the civil authorities would take over all outstanding claims in respect of requisition notes for supplies, horses, stores, &c., taken during the war from the inhabitants of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. £100,000 represents the amount paid by the military authorities to inhabitants of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in respect of similar claims in 1902–3, but which could not be charged to that year owing to proof of payment not then being forthcoming. The balance of £200,000 represents similar claims in Cape Colony which, it was thought, would have been adjudicated upon and paid in 1902–3.

Current expenditure under the Military Works Act.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the amount that will be spent by the 31st March of the present year under the Military Works Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) It is estimated that the expenditure will be about £3,600,000.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that Chinese labourers in the Transvaal will be excluded by the Ordinance recently passed from the benefits of The Transvaal Masters' and Servants' Law, 1880, he will take steps to embody in the regulations about to be framed those parts of that law which are applicable, and especially the sections empowering a Court to set aside a contract of service upon reasonable proof that one of the parties was induced to enter into the same by fraud, misrepresentation, or concealment, securing to a labourer incapacitated by sickness his full wages for the first month of sickness, and in the event of the death of a labourer securing to his heirs or legal representatives any wages that may be owing to him.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): As at present advised, in cases where free hospital accommodation is granted I doubt the equity of the second point suggested by the hon. Member, and the first and third points will, I believe, be secured by the existing law. I will take legal advice on the subject and the suggestion will be carefully considered.

China and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will present to the House at an early date a report of the proceedings at the recent conference between representatives of the Foreign and Colonial Offices and the Chinese Minister.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not prepared to do this during the progress of negotiations. The House, will, of course, be informed of the result.

Unskilled White Labour in the Transvaal.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will include in the information as to the number of British workmen employed in the Transvaal, which he is about to ask Lord Milner to furnish, a statement showing how many of these workmen, and of Europeans of other nationalities, are employed in unskilled labour, which before the war used to be generally performed by Kaffirs, in the crushing mills on the Rand, and in other departments of the gold-mining industry.

*MR LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

Income-Tax.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to arrange for the appointment of the Select Committee of this House, contemplated by his predecessor, to inquire into matters connected with the incidence and collection of the income-tax; and, if so, whether the reference to such Committee would include an inquiry into the practicability of a further graduation of the income-tax above the present limit of £700.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): At the same time may I ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intends to act upon the suggestion made by his predecessor, and institute an inquiry into the method of assessing and collecting the income-tax, with a view to prevent evasion, which it is believed takes place under the existing system.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I am considering the advisability of appointing a Departmental Committee to inquire into the question of evasion and certain other matters connected with the income-tax, but I am not yet in a position to make a definite statement on the subject. The subject of graduation would not be included in the scope of the inquiry which I contemplate.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will it be a Select Committee of this House?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, it will be Departmental, though not necessarily composed wholly of Departmental officials.

American Mail Delays.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that on several occasions since the beginning of November the American mails, made up on Wednesday in London, have not been delivered in New York before the Saturday of the following week, being the same day on which the mails leaving Liverpool on Saturday arrive, so that the advantage of a midweek mail has been lost; and, if so, will he state whether this is in consequence of slow boats being employed for the midweek mails, contrary to the arrangement with the contractors; and, if so, whether he will call their attention to the terms of their contract.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): On three occasions since the beginning of November mails despatched from London on a Wednesday have not been delivered in New York until Saturday of the following week; but the advantage of a mid-week despatch was not lost, as supposed, as the corresponding Saturday despatch did not reach New York till the Monday on two of those occasions, and ten or twelve hours later than the mid-week mail on the third occasion. The contractors have merely used their right to withdraw their faster steamers for overhaul, and employ slower ones. A provision in the contract enables me, when boats below a certain speed are employed, to send the mails by another route, when there is an advantage to be gained; and it has already been arranged to take advantage of the Southampton route on the 2nd and 9th of March, when the White Star Company will again not have one of their fastest steamers at their disposal.

MR. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that these delays would be avoided if the Queenstown route were used?

LORD STANLEY: On the contrary, they occur because that route is used.

Railway Goods Rates in Ireland.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Department of Agriculture is aware of the higher rates charged by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company for the carriage of goods to Killarney over Tralee, though Tralee is twenty miles further; and if the Department propose to take any steps to regulate such charges.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAD (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): No complaints have been received by the Department in this matter. Any specific representations that may be made to it will be duly inquired into.

MR. MURPHY: May I point out to the right hon. Gentleman that I called attention to this particular matter twelve months ago.† Surely the Department ought to have taken the matter up?

MR. WYNDHAM: Those who have local knowledge of the facts should make specific representations to the Department. I have no local knowledge.

MR. MURPHY: I have. If I make complaint, will the right hon. Gentleman cause the Department to move?

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member must make his specific complaint to the Department.

Railway Rates for Kerry Potatoes.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to state what special arrangements for the carriage of early potatoes from Cahirciveen and other parts of Kerry have been made with the railway company by the Congested Districts Board and the Department of Agriculture.

MR. WYNDHAM: The railway company has offered the same reduced rates as were given last year from Cahirciveen and other places in the south of Ireland. Details cannot conveniently be stated in an oral reply, and, in anticipation of the hon. Member's consent, they will be printed with the replies to unstarred Questions on to-night's Votes.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxvii., 161.

Caragh Lake Road, Kerry.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board voted £250 towards the construction of the Caragh Lake road, county Kerry, on the condition that the subsidy would be availed of before next May, and that the Killarney Rural District Council voted a similar amount; and, if so, will he say what steps will be taken to have this work carried out.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir; the Congested Districts Board offered to contribute this amount towards the construction of the road in question. It has since been ascertained, however, that the road is not a public road within the meaning of the statute and that any expenditure on it out of the rates would be liable to disallowance by the Auditor. The Board's contribution, in the circumstances, will be applied to another road near Caragh lake. Its acceptance will be open for two years from the date of the grant.

Irish Land Act Report.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the first Report, pursuant to Section 23 (14) of the Irish Land Act, 1903, will be published, and whether an interim Report and Returns will be published in view of the public interest in the operation of the Act.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The form of this Report and the date of its publication must, in pursuance of the provisions of the Act, be determined in consultation with the Treasury. I will consider the practicability of giving an interim Return.

National Expenditure.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether His Majesty's Government will adopt the recommendations of the Select Committee on National Expenditure which reported in July last.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: May I also ask the First Lord of the Treasury can he now say what decision His Majesty's Government have arrived at with reference to the recommendations of the Select Committee on National Expenditure that an Estimates Committee should be appointed at the beginning of each session for examination of and report on one class of the Estimates precedent to their discussion in Committee of Supply, and that a day should be provided for the consideration by this House of the Reports of the Public Accounts Committee, and an opportunity be given of taking a decision upon the recommendations embodied therein.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The Government have always felt, and I have constantly expressed the feeling, that under our present system, debates in Committee of Supply, useful as they are, indeed, absolutely of the first importance as they are, are important only from the point of view of the discussion of general principles of policy. I think the whole House is of one mind on the point that, whatever excellent effects may come from our debates in Committee of Supply, they do not conduce to ecomony. Whether a direct House of Commons machinery for dealing with the details of the Estimates, if such a machinery existed, would greatly reduce the bulk of annual Estimates I confess I doubt. I think the great increase that has taken place in them has been due to policy—policy which may be good or may be bad, but which is, at all events, based on general considerations, which affect chiefly the Navy, the Army, and education; and no amount of analysis of details would produce any great or sensible diminution of the very heavy burdens which are annually cast upon the taxpayer. But at the same time the Government feel that it has to be admitted that no machinery for examining the details exists; and as there has been this great and continuous growth in the Estimates it is quite impossible for us, and would be most undesirable, to resist any well-thought-out scheme for supplying a want which my hon. friend and others feel to be urgent. At the same time I frankly admit that I have some difficulty as to how we ought to proceed. The recommendations of the Committee to which my hon. friend refers are, I think, very ingenious, and contain a great many suggestions which would probably prove of value; but I am not at all sure that in their present form they are of a kind which the House would be prepared to accept. For example, the Committee evidently contemplate that it is the Estimates of the year, or one class of the Estimates of the year, that should be examined by the proposed Committee. I do not think that that is really practicable. I am sure, in fact, that it is not practicable as regards either the Army or the Navy, because they are not, and cannot be, completed, I think, very much before the meeting of Parliament; and, as the House knows, the very first financial business we have to take is Vote A and Vote 1 for the Navy, and Vote A and Vote 1 for the Army; and it would be quite impossible that an examination of such vast Estimates as those for the Navy and Army could be examined before they are taken in the House.

Another difficulty that I feel in the suggestion of the Committee is that they contemplate that there should be a Committee of a fixed constitution, as it were, which in each successive year, should examine one branch of the Estimates. I am not sure whether the Irish or the Scottish Members would think it a convenient plan that a Committee of this fixed constitution should examine their Estimates; but I fully concur in this proposition, that it is desirable that only one branch of the Estimates should be examined in each year, partly because there is not time for more, partly because I do not think the Departments should in every year be subjected to examination by a Parliamentary Committee. I think we shall have to add to that suggestion a distinct provision that this Committee shall not in any circumstances recommend or suggest an increase of expenditure. Otherwise you will find that your Committee is as greatly anxious to increase the burden of the whole Estimates as the Committee of the whole House. I think another suggestion which is excellent is the suggestion that policy shall be wholly excluded from the purview of the Committee, and that secret documents shall not be called for. But that, again, raises a great difficulty, because if we were to follow the example of the Public Accounts Committee, the chairman of this new Committee would be chosen from the Opposition, and I think he would be put in a very invidious position if he were obliged to be constantly over-ruling his friends as to what was a question of policy and what was not. Naturally the Oppostition are the critics of the Government, and naturally proposals to include policy as well as details of expenditure would come from them. I think, therefore, it would be rather difficult to draw the chairman from the other side of the House, and that, again, is a point on which, I think, the Committee have no advice or instruction to offer.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): The Committee would not have any effective power?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; if the Committee stretched the functions give to them by this House and dragged in questions of policy they might, no doubt, embarrass the Government of the day, but they would ultimately destroy themselves and their policy, and the whole plan of my hon. friends would fall into discredit. I am at present puzzled as to what form the procedure of the Government should take. I do not think the plan of the Committee will do as it stands, and if I gave a day for discussion we should have an interesting and important debate, but we should not arrive at any conclusion. Am I then to put down for discussion a Resolution embodying a Report with which I do not wholly agree; I think it would be convenient if some Gentlemen of the Opposition, who are the natural and legitimate critics of the Government, would consult with me as to what form the Resolution should take. If they would do so I should be very glad to do anything I can to help the House to furnish machinery which would fill up the gap which at present exists. More than that I do not think I can promise. I think my hon. friends will see that the criticisms I raise are genuine and are not prompted by any dilatory motives.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could reply to the second part of the Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I apologise for not answering that part of the Question. I see no objection, on the contrary I see some advantages, in employing one of the twenty-three days now given to Supply, to a discussion of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee; but as to whether that would be possible under the existing Standing Orders I shall have to consult the authorities of the House. I am afraid that it would require an alteration of the Standing Orders, and therefore, although I quite accept the the principle of my hon. friend's suggestion, I cannot promise that it will be immediately carried into effect.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But would not the right hon. Gentleman consider whether he could give us the twenty-fourth day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, if my hon. friend will consider how little prospect there is of our getting any legislation before Easter this year he will feel that we have not many days to throw about; and, as I may have to give him a day, indeed I hope I shall give him a day, for the discussion of his other proposals in connection with finance, I could not make him a promise as to the twenty-fourth day.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Do I understand from my right hon. friend that he is going to consult with some of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite as to a convenient form in which the Resolution could be put down to serve as a basis for discussion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should greatly desire to consult, but the consultation involves two parties.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I shall be ready to consult, but I will not go further than that.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN I should like to ask as to the business for Thursday and for the early days of the next week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand there is a general wish in the House not to take the Army Estimates on Thursday. To that wish I shall be very glad to yield; and we propose, therefore, to continue the Navy Estimates on Thursday, excepting, of course, Votes 8 and 9. On Monday we propose to move the Speaker out of the Chair on the Army Estimates.

WAR OFFICE REFORM.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I desire to ask the Secretary for War, or whoever can speak for him, why that mysterious document embodying the recommendation of a Committee of three, sitting on our Army system, already published in the newspapers, has not yet been delivered to Members.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not at all certain that I am not to blame for that. At the end of last week, when I was consulted on the subject, I said I personally saw no objection to the publication of the Report. There I left the matter. I think it is unfortunate that documents of this sort should be given to the Press before they are given to Members, and I will endeavour to guard against a repetition of the occurrence.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This is a somewhat aggravated case. I raised the point on Friday, and such explanations as could be given were given, but Members are still without the Report.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There seems to be some mystery about it. The King's printers and the Press received the document at the same time, and the inference seems to be that the latter prints their matter rather more quickly than the former. At the same time I regret the occurrence.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)

MR. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen members in respect of the Musical Copyright Bill:—Sir Frederick Banbury, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Grant, Mr. Hugh Law, Sir Herbert

Maxwell, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Moss, Mr. Mount, and Sir Gilbert Parker.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Charles James Stanley Howard, esquire, commonly called Viscount Morpeth, for the Borough of Birmingham (South Division).

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

"To enable women to be elected and act as members of County and Borough Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir Richard Jebb, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Emmott, Captain Norton, Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Yerburgh, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Lough, and Mr. John Burns; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 104.]

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

"To provide that no prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Broadhurst, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 105.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committte.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 131,100 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, including 20,656 Royal Marines."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said he presumed it would be understood that on that Vote they would have a general discussion on the various points of detail which arose on the statements of the Secretary to the Admiralty made on the previous day. He did not propose himself to detain the House for more than a very few minutes, but he wished to mention one or two points, on which he thought the remarks he had to make would not be of an altogether agreeable nature to the hon. Gentleman. He would perhaps allow him to say that he was skipping compliments for the purpose of saving the time of the Committee, but he might remark that the whole House was very pleased with the statement made by the hon. Gentleman, and he hoped he would bear in mind that if he did not allude to it in any detail his only object was to save the time of hon. Members. He spoke as one of those who were friendly to the policy of the Board of Admiralty, and he was prepared even to support it in what many thought was its extravagance—what some hon. Members thought was extravagance in the present Estimates. So long as we were spending such vastly greater sums of money upon the Army of the Empire, he did not think it was possible to object to the policy of the Admiralty. It was an extraordinary fact that, in all calculations on the subject of the expenditure on the Army, the cost of the Army outside the United Kingdom was never taken into account. It was the case that we were spending vastly more upon the land services than we were upon our naval services, and so long as that was so, he confessed he should view with more than indulgence what was called the extravagant policy in regard to the Navy. There were two points which he wished to bring before the Committee on this occasion, and in regard to them he was obliged to assume an attitude somewhat hostile to the Board of Admiralty. Perhaps, however, when the Secretary to the Admiralty had been longer in office he would come to admit that the Lords of the Admiralty were, after all, only human, and that they were fallible. On the preceding day the hon. Gentleman was a little bit inclined to put the authority of the Board of Admiralty somewhat too high. The Board of Admiralty themselves had had on many occasions to admit that they had made mistakes like other human beings. In the First Lord's statement in the present year he took credit, as he did also last year, for the change in connection with the School at Greenwich. In that matter the Board of Admiralty, only six or seven years ago, suggested to Mr. Goschen, who was then First Lord, that it was a ridiculous suggestion which had been made, yet the proposal which they then treated as ridiculous, although based on the experience of foreign countries, had since been accepted by the Admiralty, who sought to take credit for a very great achievement. That was a point upon which he thought the Admiralty might go a great deal farther than they had already done.

Now he came to the first of the two points to which he wished to draw the attention of the Committee, and that was this: The hon. Member for Dundee on the previous day had spoken of the frankness of the Admiralty, and undoubtedly, as a rule, they did make very fair and full statements as to their policy. What he desired to refer to shortly was the extraordinary proportion of breakdowns in connection with cruisers during the recent manœuvres. There were in that House hon. Members who had strong opinions upon the subject of boilers, but, personally, he had always been content to accept the authority of others on that subject. He had never pretended to have an opinion himself upon a topic in regard to which he was obviously incompetent to form one. Judging, however, by what had occurred in all foreign fleets, he had come to the conclusion that it was not the class of boiler so much as the men who worked the boilers who were at fault. The very fact that the French navy had returned to the original Belleville boiler, and were now putting it in their new large ships, and the fact that the Admiralty itself boasted that the Belleville boiler had been giving more satisfaction of late, showed that the breakdowns of these boilers in many cases were attributable rather to lack of training in the stokers than to inherent defects. The Admiralty had placed before the country a very full and detailed report of the manœuvres, and they had shown with much frankness that an extraordinary state of things had existed—a state of things which, if it had obtained at the beginning of a war, would have brought about a terrible diminution in the proper strength of the Navy of this country. That was a very alarming condition of affairs, and he imagined that the Admiralty had come to the conclusion that what had happened in our case would happen elsewhere. It was an undoubted fact that foreign fleets were now trying to enlist skilled men at high rates of wages for stoking duties, and this, therefore, was a matter which deserved further attention at the hands of the Admiralty, who ought to lay before the House further proposals for the training of stokers. They were taking power to engage a large number of additional stokers this year; they knew a great number were taken on a few years ago and that the results were admittedly unsound, and he would urge on the Government that, if they could make some reassuring statement as to what steps they were taking in order to prevent such an enormous proportion of breakdowns in the engineering departments of cruisers freshly commissioned for manœuvres or for war, it would give great satisfaction to the Committee.

Then there was a matter which was mentioned on the previous night by two speakers on the opposite side of the House, the question of the designs of the new battleships. On that point he was not at all satisfied with the explanations which had been given by the Government. What had occurred? Great expectations had been held out to them as to the improvements which were to be effected in the new battleships to be laid down, as compared with those which had been laid down within the last year or two. But they had been told that the plans for the new ships had worked out to too large vessels, and that the slips in the dockyards became vacant at an earlier period than was expected. The first fault ought not to have occurred. One would have thought that so scientific a department as the Construction Department of the Admiralty would have had some general idea as to the size which the ships would work out at when they contained improvements of secondary armaments. In regard to the second excuse that had been given, he had looked back over the Questions which had been asked by Members interested in the Fleet, and he had found that those

Members had stated pretty accurately—on the basis, he supposed, of dockyard rumour—when the slips would become vacant. He was bound to say, therefore, that the excuses which had been put forward by the Admiralty were not sufficient to stand detailed examination, and he thought they ought to insist on a clearer statement as to how it was that this breakdown had occurred in the Chief Constructor's Department in the case of these new vessels.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that in regard to the designs of our battleships undoubtedly the Admiralty was always behind the private designer. The Constructive Department was always a little astern in the matter of construction, but at the same time it was satisfactory to know that every change made in the designs of our battleships was a change for the better. He hoped that in the new designs provision would be made for electric hoists for ammunition. The question of boilers had always been a very sore one with him. No doubt the Belleville boiler was the worst type of water-tube boiler that could have been secured, but even it had never had fair play at the hands of the Admiralty, and it was a noteworthy fact that it was not until five years after it had been introduced that instructions were issued to the Navy as to the way in which the boiler should be handled. With the water-tube boiler a new era came in, and stoking had become a fine art instead of merely a mechanical labour. The failure to properly train our stokers was undoubtedly the cause of the failure of the water-tube boiler. He did not think, however, that they would have cause of complaint on that ground in the future.

Now he came to the general question of the enormous increase in the Navy Estimates. These Estimates amounted to £42,000,000, and the Committee must remember that there were invariably Supplementary Navy Estimates amounting to £1,500,000 or £2,000,000. He ventured to assert that that was a most amazing sum to demand. He well remembered, when he was sitting on the opposite side of the House, and discussing the Navy Estimates for the year, which amounted to only £16,000,000 sterling, he told the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, whose approaching disappearance from Parliament they all regretted, that if he only liked to come down and ask the House for £30,000,000 for the Navy he would be able to obtain it. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion laughed him to scorn, but now the Government were asking not for £30,000,000 but for £42,000,000 for the Navy Estimates, a most enormous increase in an extraordinarily short period of time. How were they to regard this great increase in the naval expenditure of the country? In his opinion, and he frankly admitted it, the Estimates were too large by several millions. They were larger than they need be. But then, no doubt, the Admiralty based its policy upon secret information which the Government alone possessed, and therefore he was bound to be very cautious in his criticisms of their proposals.

In regard to the public aspect of the question, it certainly did seem to the man in the street that the occasion had now arisen when there should be a diminution rather than an increase effected in the Navy Estimates. Recent events had undoubtedly to a very considerable extent altered the balance of power, and that balance might be still further altered in the very near future. The hon. Gentleman who presented the Estimates with, what he might perhaps be permitted to call, great perspicuity and ability, seemed to be altogether erroneous in the ideas he put forward. He told them that they were adhering to the two-Power standard, but he gave an entirely new version of that standard, and he practically increased it to a three, four, or even five-Power standard. He understood the hon. Gentleman to say that they still adhered to the two-Power standard in regard to battleships, but that in regard to cruisers they felt bound to go beyond it in order to meet the special requirements of our trade. He did not agree with that at all. He would like to remind the hon. Gentleman that the purpose of the Fleet—battleships and cruisers together—was to get at the enemy to destroy him or to hold him in port so that he could cause no harm to anybody. The battleship was, no doubt, the principal fighting item of the Fleet, but the cruiser was the handmaiden of the battleship—it constituted its ears and its eyes, it was the auxiliary portion of the Fleet. The purpose of the cruiser and the battleship together was to obtain the full command of the sea. To blockade was not altogether the traditional policy of the British Navy. It watched the enemy as a cat watched a mouse, but it was not its sole desire to blockade him in a port, it rather preferred to tempt him out and either to absolutely smash him in the open sea or to be smashed itself. Having smashed the enemy it secured the command of the sea. That was what occurred at the time of the battle of Trafalgar. After that battle we held command of the sea, and the convoying duties of our cruisers became a mere matter of form, because our merchant ships went freely everywhere. Very few of them were captured by privateers and many of those which were were recaptured before they reached the enemy's ports.

In regard to the two-Power standard it was very difficult to draw comparisons, but an answer which had been circulated by the hon. Gentleman enabled the House to make some sort of comparison—which he thought was a not very unfair one in regard to the Fleets. They had got the cost of the Fleets of France, Russia, Germany, and America for the year 1903. There were, of course, different standards of comparison. Some people compared the tonnage, others compared numbers, and both comparisons were equally misleading. He thought it was not an unfair comparison to take the cost of the vessels, because that represented, more or less, the actual results. Now, they found that in 1903, France spent £12,000,000, Russia £12,000,000, Germany £10,000,000, and America £16,000,000, on their respective navies, and if they took France, Russia, and Germany, or indeed if they took the three highest expenditures, those of America, Russia, and France, they had a total of £40,000,000 expenditure on the navies of those countries combined, whereas we were going to spend no less than £42,000,000 this year on our Navy. That certainly did not represent a two-Power standard; it approximated to a three-Power standard. In his opinion that comparison was, however, rather unfair, as this country got more for its money than any other country in the world. This country got more for its money than France or Russia, infinitely more than Germany, and a great deal more than the United States. All that suggested to him a reinforcement of his view that the Estimates were on the whole rather too high. But then, again, whereas he would cut down the Army ruthlessly—indeed he would not be afraid to abolish the Army and increase the metropolitan police instead—he felt very timid indeed in touching the Navy. The Navy was the very last thing that would be reduced by anyone who felt any kind of adequate interest in the relative value of the services, and although he did strongly feel on his own information, which he admitted must necessarily be imperfect, that the Navy Estimates were too large, he must support them because they were brought in on the responsibility of a Government which ought to know, and which probably had secret information which would justify them. Therefore he was not prepared to question the Estimates from that point of view. He could not, however, compliment the First Lord of the Admiralty on either his English or his arrangement of facts. The First Lord stated that several Questions were asked in reference to the two Chilian cruisers, but, as a matter of fact, the only Question asked was one which he himself asked on March 2nd. He presumed, however, that that statement was a slip. It was now stated that the original cost of the cruisers was £2,200,000 and that they were ultimately obtained for £1,800,000. That was a saving of £400,000, but an extra £400,000 was to be spent on the cruisers.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said that was not so; the only extra expense would be for ammunition which would have had to be incurred if the Admiralty had built the ships.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it certainly looked as if there was to be extra expenditure. He wished to mention two other points. One was the question of markmanship. In his opinion the markmanship of the Navy during the last two years had been absolutely doubled in efficiency. That was not too much to say, and he thought it was almost wholly due to the very great ability and energy of Captain Percy Scott, who had worried everyone, from the First Lord downwards, in a way which had produced such admirable results. Captain Scott was, he believed, still at the head of the "Excellent," which was the scientific establishment connected with this matter, and he was the author of many valuable inventions. In point of marksmanship, or, as it was more accurately called quick-hitting, the Navy was quite twice as good as it was two years ago. If that were so its effective value was not only doubled but absolutely quadrupled, and he congratulated the Admiralty on the advance which had been made in the matter. He could not help thinking that much of this advance was perhaps due to the fact that the Admiralty now recognised that every officer in the Fleet, from the Admiral down to the lowest gunnery-lieutenant, was to be held responsible for the marksmanship. Previously the gunnery-lieutenant was not allowed the time or the opportunity for practice, because the captain or the Admiralty desired something else, but it was now absolutely established that everyone in the fleet, squadron, or ship, who had any authority at all, was responsible. That was of enormous importance, and he thought it would have a most beneficial effect on the marksmanship of the Navy. He was extremely glad it had been adopted.

Then as to the question of oil fuel, eleven years ago he ventured, in this House, to call attention to the extreme desirability of oil fuel for the Navy. This was not the moment to discuss the great facility with which a ship could be oiled as compared with coaled, as well as the saving of stoking and the saving of engines and boilers. He had, however, always recognised that there were certain difficulties of a nature which he did not desire to dwell upon. There were many reasons why those difficulties should not be dwelt upon in the House. But where he thought the Admiralty were slack was that after twenty years' experiment the results which might have been expected had not yet arrived. He was now informed that considerable improvements had been affected, and that others were in process of completion, but his own experience of the original experiments was that they were conducted in that half-hearted way in which men set about a thing which they believed was certain to fail, and that method was not calculated to produce good results. He would repeat that his private opinion, so far as he was acquainted with the circumstances, led him to believe that the Estimates were higher than they needed to be, but he felt bound to recognise that there must be information in the possession of the Government which he did not have, and which justified the Government in their responsibility of presenting to the Committee Estimates the like of which were never seen before.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said that yesterday the House was engaged in discussing a definite Motion submitted by his hon. friend for the reduction of naval armaments by international agreement. Having disposed of that Motion, the Committee was now at liberty to consider the Estimates on their merits. It had been a frequent cause of complaint in recent years that large Navy Estimates had been thrown before the House without any explanation or justification. This year there had been a justification and explanation in the Statement of the First Lord to which he wished to refer. The First Lord said that the Estimates were due to the responsibility cast by Parliament on the Admiralty to provide the country with a Navy strong enough to sustain a struggle with the navies of any two other Powers and to secure the sea-borne trade and commerce of the country. That would seem to be two objects, but in reality they were only one object. He did not believe that the trade and commerce of the country could be defended except by the destruction of the enemy's Fleet. If that were the true policy for this country it would also be the true policy for the enemy, who would abstain from attacking the trade and commerce of this country because they would not have the strength to spare for that purpose. The only protection for trade and commerce was the protection involved in smashing up the navies of the Powers opposed to this country. The Secretary to the Admiralty spoke of the extent of the trade and commerce of the country in terms which he ventured to challenge. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the trade of the Kingdom as being £1,200,000,000 sterling, but that was the trade of the Empire. There was a sentence or two from the Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty on this point which he would quote. In the year 1900 the First Lord said—

> "The sea-borne trade was between £1,100,000,000 and £1,200,000,000 but about one-fourth was trade in which the taxpayers of the United Kingdom had no interest either as buyer or seller, for it was inter-colonial trade. The taxpayer of the United Kingdom had therefore the privilege not only of taking upon himself the lion's share of the burden, but also a not less share of the burden not his own but exclusively that of his fellow subjects beyond the sea."

That fact should not be forgotten when the extent of our trade and commerce was being considered. With regard to the true purpose of naval defence, surely one consequence of that principle was that in comparing other Navies with our own we should consider the battleship and also the strong cruiser elements. He wanted to draw a contrast between our own and other navies in respect of the battleship and the strong cruiser element with regard to the suggested standard set up by the First Lord of the Admiralty in his Statement. The First Lord relied upon the two-Power standard. A good many hon. Members of the House were not perhaps aware of the facts at the time when that standard was invented, but it had not an abstract significance and did not mean any two Powers, but it was a polite way of saying that we must have a Navy strong enough to meet the possible combination of France and Russia against us. It was a piece of Parliamentary politeness, and it was not an abstract formula. The First Lord of the Admiralty said Parliament had imposed the standard. He wanted to consider whether they had exceeded or fallen short of that standard, and he wished to refer to a statement made by the present First Lord of the Admiralty about the beginning of July, 1901. That was the time of the Mediterranean scare, and the First Lord was on his defence against critics who attacked him, not for the largeness, but for the smallness of his Estimates, and his arguments went to show that they were adequate and large enough. He said—

> "If you look at the battleships, and take them in the year 1901, of all the navies of the world, you will find that the naval power of Great Britain is equal to half the navies of the rest of the world."

That was his statement, and it was in the light of that statement that he would proceed to examine by other tests the relative strength of the Navy. Accepting the battleships and the heavy cruisers as the proper type of naval strength, he would attempt to compare our own Navy with other Navies. He would take the Return which was moved for by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. In May, 1903, the ships, built and building, in the British Navy counted fifty-seven battleships, and at that time all the ships of other navies, built and building, counted 114. In other words, the battleship strength of the British Navy in 1903 was exactly equal to one half of all the other Navies of the world put together, which was the same result as that alluded to by Lord Selborne in the year 1901.

He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon was not in his place, because he put a Question yesterday upon this point which he thought was treated with some asperity by the Secretary of State for War, who followed him in the debate. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, alluding to a statement made by his hon. friend opposite as to their battleship strength, asked what the tonnage was, and the Secretary of State for War repudiated the relevancy of such a Question. No doubt tonnage was not a conclusive test, but it was not an irrelevant thing to ask; it was a very important element, and it had the great advantage of being intelligible to members of the Committee to whom other tests might be submitted without producing much impression. He thought at the time that the Secretary for War received the Question with less respect than was due to it. He would now proceed to answer the Question with all the qualifications he had made as to its significance. What was the result? The same Return to which he had already referred, for 1903, gave in first-class battleships built and building the tonnage of the British

Navy as 786,000 tons. The three highest European Powers, namely France, Russia, and Germany had a total battle ship tonnage at the same time of 770,000 tons. He was speaking of first-class battleships alone as described in the Return asked for by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean. If he threw in the other three Powers which were usually counted, the result was that the tonnage of first-class battleships belonging to Great Britain was in excess of one half of the rest of the navies of the world, and this confirmed the estimate made by the First Lord of the Admiralty in 1901. He had information a little later than the Return he had referred to, and taking armoured and protected cruisers of the first and second class together, which he would group as the big cruiser class, they had belonging to the British Navy ninety vessels, while all the other Powers in the world only number 106. That, of course, was far beyond a two-Power standard and in excess of the real standard at which they had been aiming, namely, equality with one-half of the rest of the Navies of the world. In the same year, according to another Return which they owed to his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Yarmouth, in 1903 the Navy Estimates of Great Britain, including what was due to naval works, amounted to £35,000,000, which was £7,000,000 below the Estimates for this year. When this country was spending £35,000,000 in 1903 all the other great Powers were spending as follows: France £12,500,000; Russia £10,500,000; Germany £10,000,000; Italy £5,000,000; the United States £16,000,000; and Japan £3,000,000; or a total of £57,000,000, as against £35,000,000 spent by Great Britain alone. That was more than a two-Power standard, and far more than the standard of equality of one-half of the rest of the Navies of the world. This two-Power standard was nothing more than a sort of rule-of-thumb. He thought the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean would bear him out when he said that he had never felt bound by that standard, which was a rough and ready mode of estimating what our naval strength ought to be. He wished to warn the hon. Gentleman of the danger of setting this up as an abstract formula. It was dangerous because there were such things as naval alliances and there were such things as understandings that did not amount to alliances. Were they going to build against Japan for instance, or against the United States? The late Chancellor of the Exchequer accepted that proposition, but he did not think it really entered into the intentions of the Admiralty. Then came this proposal, if the Admiralty were to take account of ships which appeared in foreign programmes, ought they not also to take account of ships which disappeared from those programmes? If the two-Power standard was to be set up as an abstract formula, such questions as that would have to be dealt with. Moreover, the Admiralty would have to recognise not only progressive but also stationary programmes. France had a great burst of activity after the Fashoda crisis, but she had got tired of the competition and had reduced her Navy Estimates from £13,000,000 to £12,000,000. He asked the representative of the Admiralty to state what account had been taken by the authors of these Estimates not only of the disappearance of ships against which we had built, but also of the reduction in naval programmes which had been held up as necessitating corresponding action on our part.

With regard to the two Chilian ships, if the programme was not being extended, surely the addition of those ships ought to have resulted in the withdrawal of two ships from the programme of the coming year. As he understood, one proposed ship was to be withdrawn and the construction of another postponed.

MR. PRETYMAN pointed out that the commencement of two others was to be postponed, with the possibility of another being withdrawn later.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that that explanation would acquit him of the necessity of pursuing the topic further. One other matter to which he wished to refer was the new system of selecting cadets for the Navy. He had never pretended that he regarded with anything but horror the submitting of tender infants of twelve years to competitive examinations. The new system had two distinct disadvantages, it necessarily barred out selection by merit and it added enormously to the expense of a naval education. The policy was a dangerous one because it excluded from the naval service all but an infinitesimal proportion of the young brain and muscle of the country, and it would result in naval officers being more governed by class selection and influenced by class prejudice than was the case at present. The object of Mr. Goschen's proposals—which were very different from those now made and to which also he strongly objected—was to get for the Navy public school boys, whom Mr. Goschen regarded as the finest material possible. The public schools wholly failed to meet the demand, and the present proposals were the result. By "public schools" Mr. Goschen meant the old-fashioned public schools with their passion for athletics and their contempt of knowledge. ["Oh, oh!"] He was basing his statement on professional expert opinion, because Col. Maud, a recognised authority, in a public lecture on the selection and nomination for the Army, recently declared that if he had his choice between boys from Board schools and boys from the public schools of England, he would choose the former. The ordinary public schools having failed to meet the demand, the Admiralty had determined to set up a "Naval Eton" of its own, and it was proposed to take boys in at this early age, without competition, practically without examination, practically by nomination. He did not agree that much was gained by selecting young officers at so early an age, before they had had time to make up their minds as to their future careers and before their intellect and judgment had had an opportunity to mature. The effect of the scheme would be to limit the class of naval officers to a very small portion of the population.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: It always has been so limited.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said it would be more than ever the case now. Any system was bad which would shut out from the naval service 95 per cent. of the youth of England. As an example of what he believed to be the better way, he instanced the course adopted by Japan after full inquiry among foreign navies. A Japanese naval officer speaking last week, stated that the Naval College of Japan was open to every male subject between sixteen and twenty with the exception of those who were married or had undergone any punishment, and bankrupts. The whole of the expense of the training, food, and clothing was provided out of Government funds. The examination had two sides, physical and educational. Anyone who failed in the physical examination was not entitled to be examined educationally. The educational examination included mathematics, Japanese literature, English grammar and translations, physical science and so on. The number of candidates for cadetships in the Japanese Navy last year was 1995; the number who passed the physical examination was 1400, the number who passed the qualifying examination was about 400, and the number of those finally selected was 180. There was no doubt that after such a process of selection those 180 were the very pick of the brain and muscle of Japan, and he thought a somewhat similar system would be the best for the British Navy. He believed that in the American Naval College the whole of the expense of the cadets' education was borne by the State, and that even the wealthiest parents were not allowed to send any pecuniary assistance to their sons during the period of training. If the whole expense of the training of naval officers was placed on the State the country would be able to command all the resources of the nation for the Navy. That would be a better system than the new-fangled plan lately adopted by the Admiralty, which, coupled with the increased Estimates, was attended with certain danger. He had never spoken without a sense of the overwhelming importance of the Navy for Britain's defence, and it was with that sense of responsibility he desired to point to the danger involved in excessive Estimates and the divorce of the Navy from popular feeling, to which the growing exclusion of the youth of the country from the class of naval officers might lead. It was the dread of such a reaction which made him refer to these matters. If the Estimates increased to an extent which public opinion did not approve there would be a reaction against the Navy which would be far more dangerous than the reaction which had already set in against the Army. He wanted to see the Navy strong, and for that purpose he defended the position he had taken up that they ought to be able to connect every rank in the Navy with every rank of the people, and every rank ought to be open to every class within these realms.

*THE EARL OF DALKEITH (Roxburgh) said he thought the hon. Member opposite represented the feelings of all classes in the country when he said that if the money asked for by the Admiralty was properly spent it would not be begrudged. With regard to the age of the boys joining the Navy, he thought it must be something like it was at present if they were to do without training in the college. He would not deal further with the point at the present moment because perhaps it would come up on the Education Vote. There was the objection to the present system that it was an extremely costly one. He hoped his hon. friend would give them more information, because there were rumours that a very large number of the boys had not turned out very satisfactorily as regarded their capacity for taking in the information they were supposed to acquire. He hoped they had been able to secure boys at any rate of average ability. He knew that many years ago the age was twelve and a half years to fourteen years and then the competition was limited by nomination. The main point, however, they had to consider, was whether these enormous Estimates were necessary for the country and whether they had been justified. They also wished to know whether for the money they were voting they were going to get a thoroughly good return. Last year the Admiralty thought £34,500,000 was quite sufficient for the requirements of the Navy apart from the sums taken under the Naval Works Act. Since then Supplementary Estimates had been granted amounting to £1,300,000, and if they added that to the Estimates of this year they would have an increase of about £4,000,000 in all. He did not think they had had quite sufficient information put before them to show that such a large increase was justified. Like the hon. Member for King's Lynn, however, he would hesitate to vote against the sum which was put before the Committee on the responsibility of those who were in the best position to know what money was required. Nevertheless he hoped they would have some information upon the points he had mentioned. He quite understood that there had been a large increase owing to the pushing forward of the construction of ships now being built, and upon those now being repaired in private dockyards. All that was necessary to have the Fleet in a condition ready for active service, but he did not think it justified such a very large shipbuilding programme.

He wished to refer to some of those cruisers laid down some years ago, and which had not come up to expectation. He referred more particularly to those of the "County" class. They had light armaments, and although their speed was good he had heard that they had not acquitted themselves well in a heavy sea. Another point which had been alluded to was that of the design of new battleships. A distinguished naval officer had told him that, undoubtedly, there was great advantage in having eight ships all of the same design, but he ventured to think there was no admiral who would not prefer to have five of the "King Edward VII." type and three of a superior design. He did not think it was creditable to the Construction Department that the Admiralty should one year inform the House that they intended to build ships of a new design, and the next year have to inform the House that they had been unable to obtain the design, and he hoped this would not occur again in the future. One thing which was certainly to our advantage in the purchase of the Chilian ships was that they were of a different design, and they met many objections which had been raised to the very large tonnage in our later battleships. Therefore he hoped the Admiralty would give them a thorough test in order to see whether the objections they had, and perhaps very properly had, to ships of that class might be removed, and their good points embodied in our battleships in the future. The next point was that of the *personnel*. In this year's Estimates there was a large increase both for *personnel* and shipbuilding. As far as he could see the other Votes had been kept down, and the amount for coal was somewhat less than usual, although one would have thought that that was hardly justifiable. It appeared that the Admiralty had done their best to keep down expenses outside the shipbuilding. With regard to *personnel* there was the question of promoting captains at a younger age to the rank of admiral, and he would like a little further information on that matter. According to this change admirals would retire at an earlier age and the list of pensions would be very greatly increased. With reference to promoting captains at an earlier age, they required some more information as to what the extra cost would be on the Navy Estimates in years to come, owing to earlier retirement of officers.

Another way in which a saving might be effected was in developing the system of short service. He was glad to see that the Admiralty were entering surgeons for Admiralty work temporarily, for in this way they would get a larger number of men accustomed to sea life who would probably be available in time of war. Another point he wished to call attention to was the large number of men locked up in ships, which although they were useful in time of peace were practically useless in time of war. On the China Station they had a large number of sloops which would have to return to Hong-Kong if war broke out. He wished to know what was going to happen to those men? He thought that having spent so much on foreign dockyards they might have had some ships in reserve abroad to which the crews of those sloops might be transferred in time of war. He was glad to see that in these Estimates no money was taken for the building of this kind of ship, which were practically useless from a naval point of view. With regard to the new squadron raised for the Atlantic he thought that in the course of a few months time it would be equal in size to the one at the Cape. At the same time there was a danger in increasing their commands, and this was a matter which should be carefully considered. He thought it was rather bad policy for the Government to ask the House to spend an enormous amount of money upon accommodation for the Fleet at the Cape of Good Hope, when the squadron there was to be reduced. There were many things which made one feel that the money had not been spent to the best advantage. A certain amount of money had been somewhat—he did not say wasted, but had not been made to go quite as far as it might have done. The Admiralty in the course of the past year had initiated some very important reforms. There was a more modern spirit prevailing now. In regard to gunnery he thought the improvement was owing, perhaps, to the efforts of Captain Scott. A great many reforms had been initiated by Admiral Fisher. He hoped the spirit of progress would continue, and that they would get rid of old and useless traditions. He hoped also that the Admiralty would give an assurance that they were looking most carefully into expenditure, and that they would make perfectly certain we were getting the best value for our money.

*Sir LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.) said he wished to refer to the question of the supply of steam coal for the Navy. It was a well-known fact that smokeless steam coal was fast diminishing, and the fact that it was fast diminishing constituted in his opinion a national danger. He thought the Admiralty should look to this by laying up for itself in some way or other a large supply of smokeless steam coal. This had been lately emphasised by some important letters which had appeared in *The Times*, written by the well known geologist, Professor Boyd Dawkins, of the Victoria University, Manchester. This kind of coal was very restricted in its amount. He believed that a small amount of it was to be found in Belgium, but the principal centre where it was found was in South Wales. We had not very much information with regard to it, because the Board of Trade Returns did not differentiate between steam coal and the smokless steam coal which was especially useful for our ships, but Mr. Robson, Inspector of Mines for the Swansea District, estimated the total area in South Wales of the smokeless semi-bituminous coal-field at 158 square miles. A Royal

Commission was sitting to inquire how much of this was unworked and how much of it would be useful for naval purposes. The subject was one for careful consideration on the part of the Admiralty. From the Returns of the export of coal he found that in 1902 something like 43,000,000 tons were exported, and of that amount 19,000,000 were exported from Cardiff, Swansea, and Newport. The Returns did not show how much of that coal was for naval purposes, but the presumption was that the greater portion was for naval purposes on the part of our foreign neighbours. He found that 7,500,000 tons went to France, and between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 tons to Russia. He found from the Returns for 1903 that out of 44,000,000 tons exported 34,000,000 tons consisted of steam coal. One recent contract alone for Japan was, he understood, for something like 80,000 tons. No doubt this was for smokeless steam coal for naval purposes. He approved of the suggestion which had already been made by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil that the Admiralty should purchase an area of the South Wales coal field. He suggested that they should purchase 10,000 acres of it, and keep it unworked for naval purposes. The smokeless steam coal should not be kept in any other form, because, when stored it deteriorated in value. He knew at the same time that in France smokeless steam coal had been stored. He was informed that recently it was impossible for the Government to obtain what were called "spot cargoes" of this coal because the coal was going to nations like Russia and Japan. We had in this country a monopoly of this smokeless steam coal, which would give us a great advantage in time of war. He suggested that the Royal Commission should hasten the inquiry, and that they should present an interim Report on this matter, which was of vital importance from the national point of view.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) said he should like to put one or two Questions regarding the comparative amounts demanded in this country, in Continental countries, and in America, for naval expenditure. The Secretary to the Admiralty yesterday based the whole question of the Naval Estimates on the two-Power standard. In the Return which the hon. Gentleman was kind enough to furnish yesterday he found that our total naval expenditure for 1904–5, including expenditure under the Naval Works Act, would amount to £42,000,000, exclusive of any Supplementary Estimates which might be presented. How did that compare with the expenditure of foreign nations? He found that the total naval expenditure in 1903 of France, Germany, and Russia amounted in the aggregate to only £35,000,000, so that if our expenditure was compared with that of the principal Continental nations we had not a two-Power standard but a three-and-a-half-Power standard. If he included the naval expenditure of America in 1903, namely, £17,000,000, he found that the total naval expenditure of France, Russia, and America was precisely the same as it was proposed that England should spend in the present year. Therefore, including America among our possible enemies, we were still on a three-Power standard instead of two. It would of course be said at once that the pay of our sailors, who were engaged by voluntary enlistment, was higher than that of compulsory service men abroad. So far as regarded America that argument however did not apply at all because the pay in general for American seamen was in excess of that of English seamen. Even restricting the comparison to Continental compulsory service nations, he thought it would be found that the pay of the Navy did not represent a very large percentage of the whole. So that an explanation of the different rates of pay here and abroad would only go a short distance to furnish the explanation required. On another point, namely, that of naval construction, which represented a large proportion of the total Estimates, he thought the hon. Gentleman would admit that the construction of ships in England might be roughly taken as 33 per cent. cheaper than abroad, and he believed he should be correct in stating that, comparing English construction with American, the cost in this country would be to even a larger proportion cheaper than in America. He should imagine naval construction here was something like 50 per cent. cheaper than in America, and, viewing the matter in a broad sense, he should think the cheapness of construction here fully counterbalanced, and more than counterbalanced, the additional cost of pay under our free system of enlistment. He wanted to know how the Government justified the present Estimates of £42,000,000 in view of the comparatively small expenditure of foreign countries. He was altogether in favour of a strong Navy, but they must draw the line somewhere. It was an obvious danger which lay before this country, that instead of following in the dance of increased Naval Estimates it was we who were leading the dance. Not only to justify the present Estimates but also to prevent a large increase in foreign naval Estimates, a full statement of the comparative progress of the Navy was required. The inclusion in the Return presented yesterday of the expenditure under the Naval Works Act was a very satisfactory new departure, and he would suggest a similar procedure in the case of the Army, where there was also a similar large loan expenditure, and in the case of all those Departments which, outside the ordinary Budget, spent large sums of borrowed capital in the course of the financial year.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) said it was a good many years since he had taken a part in a naval debate in the House. Frequent reference had been made to the standard that our Navy should be equal to the fighting power of the other new navies, and as the author of the standard he might be allowed to refer to the circumstances in which it was adopted. Down to 1885 there was practically only one country which had a great fleet, viz., France. Russia and Germany were developing a sea-going fleet in place of the shallow guardships, and therefore it was thought desirable, considering the overwhelming importance of our commerce, that we should fix on a figure and on an establishment which would be equal to the combined forces of any two nations. He believed that that standard, estimated fairly, was a legitimate standard, and one below which we certainly ought not to go. Looking through the Estimates, he was impressed by two things. Since the Naval Defence Act, the growth of Vote 1, which was for the men, was only 50 per cent., but when the Vote for construction was come to, the increase was found to be enormous. The expenditure contemplated by the Act to keep the Fleet up to the standard laid down, was £2,600,000 a year, but the amount now asked for new construction was £11,600,000. In other words the increase for construction was 400 per cent., while the increase for *personnel* was only 57 per cent. At this critical stage of affairs in the Far East, he would not be a party to anything which would prevent the Government getting the money they considered desirable, but he thought we needed some accurate classification of the fighting power of the ships on which our standard was based, because it was very easy by a little manœuvring to show that expenditure was much too great, or much too little. What was really wanted was some accurate classification of our ships, taking ship by ship. Two conditions ought to govern that classification —1st, the size of the ship; 2nd, the date at which it was designed, not the date at which it was put in commission, because we designed and built our ships rapidly, and by making the date that on which she was put in commission, a ship of inferior class might be put into a higher class. The present Board of Admiralty had made many improvements in various directions, and he entirely agreed with the general policy of Lord Selborne, but a tremendous responsibility attached to the expenditure of gigantic sums concentrated in a few hands. At present outside the Admiralty there were a large number of private firms engaged on works connected with munitions of war almost identical with that on which the officials of the Admiralty were engaged. He thought it most desirable that we should draw for consultative purposes on that outside opinion in connection with the design of ships. It should be remembered that the better the design of a ship, the longer would that ship remain an effective fighting machine; and the worse the design the shorter it would remain an effective fighting machine. Therefore, the worse the design the larger would be the expenditure. One of the difficulties in administering Navy affairs was, that there was a natural desire that the Department should not lose touch with the most modern, or what was supposed to be the most progressive, ideas, but which often were the fads of the moment. Over and over again it had occurred that a very large sum of money had been spent on some new idea, and that money was afterwards proved to have been wasted.

There were three branches of expenditure connected with the *matériel* of the Navy—guns, machinery, and displacement. He thought that the consultative committee of outside engineers which Lord Selborne had established in regard to guns and machinery was a most excellent institution. Might not something of the same kind be established in connection with the designs of our ships? He had every confidence in the present head of the Construction Department of the Admiralty; such ships as he had designed showed his competency. He also thought that anyone acquainted with Sir W. White's work would admit that that gentleman had conferred immeasurable benefits on the Navy by the remarkable series of effective designs he had prepared. But there were certain things connected with our battleships and cruisers which he had never been able to get a satisfactory explanation of from the Admiralty. Take the case of displacement. Foreign constructors allowed more guns, armament, and machinery for a particular displacement than we did. By way of explanation it was said that we gave more accommodation to our men, carried more ammunition, coal, and other things. But, when that had been allowed for, it did not account for the remarkable difference there was between the carrying capacity of British and foreign vessels. The difference must, it seemed to him, be attributable either to our using heavier internal fittings, or to the form of our vessels being less favourable to carrying capacity. He remembered some years ago when discussing the carrying capacity of British and foreign ships with Sir E. Harland, the head of the Belfast firm of shipbuilders, that that gentleman stated that if he were allowed to alter the form of an Admiralty cruiser he could build it to give quite 500 tons more carrying capacity, and an extra half knot of speed, whilst complying with all the other conditions of the Admiralty. Subsequently Sir E. Harland assured him that he could do the same thing in building battleships. He desired, therefore, to suggest that when contracts were given to private yards some latitude should be allowed in altering the form of our ships from that laid down by the Admiralty. His suggestion was two-fold—that the contract should be given to outside shipbuilders, and also that the Admiralty should take into consideration the desirability of having a small Committee with which the head of the Constructive Department might consult. He did not want that body to be anything more than consultative, because he had no desire to impair Executive responsibility in the matter of construction; but if we were to draw somewhat more on the outside experience of private firms, he thought we should minimise the likelihood of mistakes in the future.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that the Admiralty had every reason to congratulate themselves on the lines the debate had taken. He fully appreciated the recognition which had been made by nearly every hon. Member who had spoken of the efforts of the Admiralty. What was more important, the debate had been fruitful in criticism and suggestion, which the Admiralty fully welcomed, and which could not be but of the greatest service to the country and Navy. He himself felt his personal deficiency in having to answer fully the criticisms which had come from those who, like his noble friend, had himself held for a long period the position of First Lord of the Admiralty, and other hon. Members who had made a life-long study of naval questions, but with the indulgence of the Committee he would do his best to reply. As regards the speech of his noble friend, the accurate comparison of one ship or one fleet with another was a problem of endless difficulty; but he could assure his noble friend that no problem was more often discussed within the Admiralty. When they came to questions of displacement and length, innumerable factors arose which acted and reacted on one another and rendered it impossible that any real conclusion could be arrived at in a Parliamentary debate. He had in his hands a comparison which he thought would throw light on this question, a comparison between the two new ships we had bought—the "Triumph" and the "Swiftsure,"—which were designed by a great constructor, and the "Duncan" class, which were ships of much the same size. Before giving the figures, however, he wished to point out a very important consideration—namely, that if a free hand was given to contractors as to the design of ships, they could not have those homogeneous squadrons to which the Admiralty attached so much importance. Not only was it important to have ships of similar armament, displacement, and speed, but it was also of enormous importance that the position of the guns and the line of fire should be homogeneous. He thought it would be allowed that, whatever might be the ability of any contractor or designer outside the Admiralty, it was only within the Admiralty itself that all these factors and considerations could be properly brought together and receive their due weight. Then, again, it often happened that in comparing one of their own ships to a ship of a foreign nation, some particular point was selected on which their ship came out second. No such criticism, however, on any single point could really in any sense be conclusive unless all the other factors, and the work the two ships were expected to do, were also taken into consideration. He would now give the figures to which he had referred. The "Triumph" and the "Swiftsure" had on the design draft 2,330 tons less displacement than the "Duncan" class. As completed, the "Duncan" class had worked out to a less displacement of 330 tons, so that the actual difference was 2,000 tons almost exactly. In equipment there was a difference of 234 tons, in armament 20 tons, in machinery 595 tons. That was a most important point. The machinery put into their ships was clearly of a stronger class than that put into the ships of any other country. The engines of the "Swiftsure" and "Triumph" were very much quicker running than those of the "Duncan." Other things being equal, it was certainly desirable not to have too quick running engines in a battleship; and the Admiralty believed that, so far as stability and reliability and strength of engines were concerned, this difference of 595 tons was by no means wasted. In armour and protection there was a difference of 580 tons, in coals 100 tons, and 770 tons in the hull. Roughly speaking, for every ton put into a ship it was necessary to add a ton and a half for the necessary space and extra strength of the hull, and he had merely quoted these figures to show that the extra weight had not been thrown away.

There had been a general feeling expressed, which the Admiralty would recognise as fully justified, that a very great responsibility was incurred in asking for this immense sum of money. The question must not be judged entirely by figures, as could be seen from the fact that it was always possible for anyone who desired to prove that we were a long way below the two-Power standard to take figures and do so. He had no doubt his hon. friend the Member for Chester could prove that on behalf of the Navy League.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester) said he would be very happy to prove that we had got no margin at all.

*__Mr. PRETYMAN__ said that some hon. Members had proved to their own satisfaction that this country had a very large margin indeed. But on the question of how they stood as compared with other countries, there was, he thought, one circumstance of very great importance, and that was, that our Navy was not affiliated to the shores and ports of the United Kingdom. They had the whole world mapped out for naval stations, and in every quarter of the globe it was necessary that our ships should be able to find the accommodation and docks and stores they required, so that they might be absolutely efficient for war. That was a condition of affairs which prevailed in no other country, and it accounted to a large extent for the very heavy expenditure we had as compared with other countries. This country could not afford to take the risk either that a Power which to-day was perfectly friendly would be always friendly, or, on the other hand, that an enemy's ship would always be without the stores and men she required to make her an efficient ship.

Mr. YERBURGH: Have the Admiralty taken into consideration the position of a strong neutral Power which might possibly interfere in case of our possible struggle with two other Powers?

*__Mr. PRETYMAN__: Yes; every such point is carefully considered. If it was said that it was sufficient if we had a Fleet of such strength that it could smash the enemy's fleet, when the high road of the sea would be open to our commerce, he replied that that needed time. Did anyone consider that we could count on smashing our enemy in the course of a very few weeks, and did he further consider what amount of food supplies and raw material there was in this country at any given time to supply our people?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON suggested that, as the policy of an enemy would be to smash our Fleet, they would have no force to spare to attack our commerce.

*MR. PRETYMAN replied that foreign countries, who, after all, were not all fools, were well aware of our weak points, which were sufficiently advertised in that House. It was well known that we had no long supplies of food or raw material in this country, and therefore it was absolutely necessary in the early stages of a war, and before we had obtained the mastery of the sea, that we should maintain open the ocean highways, otherwise all our expenditure would be rendered futile. That was the reason why the additional force of cruisers was necessary to police the seas over and above the ships, both battleships and cruisers, which were required in order to meet the organised forces of the enemy and blockade his ports. The present conditions of naval warfare were such that it was practically impossible to seal an enemy's port as in the old days, when if the wind was in shore it was impossible for a ship to come out of harbour, and when we knew as well as the enemy the times when it was possible to endeavour to do so. Nowadays a commerce destroyer could issue on the darkest nights in any weather, and the damage that could be done to our commerce in that way was obvious to every one.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: My hon. friend does not surely intend to suggest that one or any number of destroyers could starve us out.

*MR. PRETYMAN said it was not necessary to stop all the avenues to our shores in order to starve us. It would be sufficient to cause enormous distress if the price of commodities or raw material were raised 200 or 300 per cent. by the capture of some important ships.

Turning to other points, he admitted that there were a considerable number of breaksdown of cruisers in the last manœuvres, but this was almost entirely connected with the question of the training of stokers, and the greatest attention was being given to this matter by the Admiralty. It was going too far to say that Osborne was a place only for the sons of the rich. If the expenses which parents would incur during the extra two years their sons now spent at Osborne were compared with the expenses formerly spent upon crammers and examinations, the balance of cheapness would be found largely to lie with Osborne. The Navy never had consisted of the class of rich men, and he was perfectly convinced that nothing in the present scheme would bring about any change in that direction. The Japanese method advocated by the hon. Member must involve several competitive examinations, and it was the opinion of all naval officers with whom he had come into contact that they could not begin the education of a boy too young in a naval atmosphere. The choice as to ages lay between twelve or thirteen and seventeen or eighteen; there was no middle course. It was not quite accurate to say that under the old system the public schools failed to meet the demand. The truth was that the boys went to crammers instead of to the schools, because it was not convenient that they should leave the public schools after such a short stay. The boys were not at the schools long enough to imbibe public school traditions, consequently, as the greatest gain to character was derived from the last two years of the ordinary period of public school life, the object of the Government in desiring that class of boy was largely defeated.

The hon. Members for King's Lynn and Salford had asked questions about fuel and coal. The question of fuel and coal for the Navy was occupying the very careful attention of the Admiralty; but he did not think it would be to the advantage of the country if he were to go into the details. The problem the Admiralty had to solve was the burning of oil fuel in combination with coal, and this clearly affected the question of the coal supplies. He entirely agreed that the particular kind of coal which under present circumstances they were obliged to use was found only in limited areas, and that there was no reason to hope that future discoveries would largely extend those areas. Inquiries, however, were being made on this very question, and not only were the Admiralty in close communication on the question of coal supplies with the Coal Commission, which was now sitting, but they had two Departmental Committees dealing with the question of oil fuel and its application, and experiments were being carried out from day to day. He assured the Committee that the matter was engaging the closest attention of the Admiralty, and he hoped that that would be accepted as a sufficient statement at the present stage. He could not say at the moment what would be the cost on non-effective Votes resulting from the new system of retirement. The object of the Admiralty was to obtain flag-officers in the full vigour of life, and if there was one thing on which naval authorities were more fully agreed than another, it was that, considering the enormous responsibility that was thrown on an admiral of the present time as compared with the admiral of times past, it was of supreme importance to secure for the position young officers in full possession of their mental and physical faculties. As to the question of ships in reserve abroad, it had been suggested that possibly a first-class cruiser might be laid up at Hong-Kong. The matter had been carefully considered, and the Admiralty had come to the conclusion that it was neither economical or possible in the present strength of the Fleet, to send any ships to foreign stations unless they were really required by considerations of the balance of naval power; to adopt any other course would result in more loss than gain.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) said he was anxious to say something on two matters of great national importance —the financial question and the question of the Naval Reserve. He thought that with regard to the financial question they all occupied common ground. At least he had heard no difference of opinion among the Members who had taken part in the debate—no matter on what side of the House they sat—that this country occupied an exceptional position with respect to its naval needs, and that we were bound, at whatever cost, to keep our Navy up to the strength that would enable the country to retain its position of supremacy. That strength might fairly be taken to be, roughly speaking, the two-Power standard, with something additional in the cruiser class. But what he thought had not been satisfactorily shown by his hon. friend the Secretary of the Admiralty, in spite of the ability and knowledge he had displayed in his speech, was that in the Estimates which were now presented there was not a very considerable expenditure beyond what was required to secure that standard. He hoped he should not be charged with a desire improperly to curtail the expenditure on the Navy. During the years that he was Chancellor of the Exchequer he had made himself responsible for Navy Estimates which were raised from £19,000,000 in 1895–96 to over £31,000,000 in 1902–3. He accepted the two-Power standard; he accepted the proposals of the Admiralty in order to keep up to that standard, and he believed that in so doing he was best carrying out his duty to the House and to the country. But since the Estimates of 1902–3—the last for which he was responsible—the House was asked to sanction an additional expenditure of something like £5,500,000 on the Navy. He did not think his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty had made out a case for that additional expenditure. He admitted the delicacy of the position in which the representative of the Admiralty found himself in discussing these matters, and he fully agreed as to the difficulty in instituting a comparison ship by ship between our Navy and the navy of another country. But the House was able to apply the test of expenditure. If the Admiralty, having been granted a certain sum of money, had not spent that sum as economically and as efficiently as the naval authorities of other countries spent the amounts that were granted to them, that was the fault of the Admiralty and not of the House. Several hon. Members had referred to the growth of our naval expenditure within recent years as compared with that of other Powers. He did not wish to repeat the figures, they told their own tale, and they had not been explained by the Secretary to the Admiralty. The only reply of his hon. friend was, that there were circumstances connected with the requirements of our Fleet in so many quarters of the globe which necessitated a comparatively larger expenditure on the maintenance of our squadrons at sea than was required of other countries. There was one thing in this respect which the Committee ought not to forget, viz., that we certainly did derive enormous advantages from any such increase of expenditure by this fact that so large a proportion of our Navy was always at sea and therefore would be more ready if the time should ever unhappily come to engage in war with any other nation.

He would take what, after all, was the real test in this matter, new construction. He had made a calculation when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, that during the five years ended March, 1901, this country expended £35,000,000 in new construction, whereas France and Russia, the two countries with which we had been generally comparing ourselves, expended something less than £31,000,000 during the same period. There was an excess of £4,000,000 in the five years in the expenditure of this country upon new construction. But that was not all. In 1901–2 our Estimate for new construction was £9,000,000, and so far as he was able to ascertain the new construction of France and Russia cost something under £7,000,000. He had no figures with regard to France and Russia for 1902–3, but our own new construction in that year was estimated also at about £9,000,000. The Estimate for new construction in this year's Estimates was £11,600,000, an increase of £2,500,000. It was considered sufficient by the Government of the day in 1901–2 and 1902–3 to estimate £9,000,000 for new construction in those two years. Why had £2,500,000 more been put on now. Had there been an increase in the programme of other countries with which we were obliged to compete, such as would justify it? That had never been stated by his hon. friend. He must say that, unless there had been such an increase, he failed to see the justification for the new construction Estimates of the present year. He knew that part of the £11,600,000 was due to the purchase of the two Chilian warships.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Hear, hear!

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH said part of that was new construction in anticipation of subsequent years. He had failed, however, to hear from his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty that he anticipated that the amount to be expended on new construction in later years would be diminished by the amount spent on the purchase of those Chilian ships.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he had stated that they proposed to omit altogether from the programme already approved, one new battleship this year, and possibly another one later on. The total amount taken this year for new programme construction out of £11,600,000, exclusive of the "Triumph" and "Swiftsure," was only £642,000—that was all they were asking for new construction, and the whole of the remainder of the £11,600,000 was to be expended on the construction of ships begun already with the approval and knowledge of the House.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH said that was always the way. A small sum was asked for in the beginning of a new programme, and then Parliament was held to be pledged to a very heavy expenditure in subsequent years. He hoped he might understand that the Admiralty intended to diminish our new construction bill in the future by the value of these ships [OPPOSITION cries of "No."]; but the Estimate was still £2,500,000 beyond what was thought sufficient two years ago. What had any two of the strongest Powers spent in new construction during the years that followed 1901, as compared with our own expenditure? The Admiralty were well supplied with an Intelligence Department, and if that information were laid before them they would be in a much better position to appreciate the necessity of these Estimates.

He did not question the necessity of increasing expenditure on the Naval Reserves; he should like to see that Estimate larger than it was. When the present Government came into office in 1895–96, the number of men and boys, permanently employed in the Navy, estimated for was 88,850; in 1904–5, this had increased to 131,000, the increase being continuous. He did not say it had been too great, as compared with the number of ships that had been built. But it was an increase that could not indefinitely go on, not merely on financial grounds, although that was bad enough, involving as it did an increase of barracks, hospitals, pay, clothing, and provisions, which would impose a burden on the country which he did not think the country would tolerate very long. But besides this, if the rate of increase were maintained, they would exhaust their supply, and not be able to find the men required. He saw with great pleasure that the Admiralty were at last doing something to establish a real Reserve, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee which was presided over by the right hon. Member for Berwick, but he wished they were moving faster in this direction. He was convinced that we should never have a sufficient number of men for the purposes of our Navy in war until we had established whole-heartedly in the naval service, so far as it could be applied to that service, the system of short service and Reserves which worked so admirably in the Army in the course of the South African war. He did not suggest that the two services were identical, because there were reasons for longer service in the Navy than was required in the Army. He thought, however, that more might be done in this direction than had been yet attempted—for instance, stokers might be short service men. He trusted the Admiralty would seriously give their attention to this matter and not be influenced too much by officers, who naturally desired to have as many trained and experienced men in their commands, even in time of peace, as it was possible for them to obtain.

He was only anxious to add with regard to finance, what had already been enforced on the Committee in the progress of this debate. His hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty admitted most frankly that this debate had been one of real value. It had not been confined, as he had heard debates on Naval Estimates confined, to the Members for dockyard boroughs speaking on behalf of their constituents, or to professional men speaking on behalf of naval officers. In the present debate the great question of finance had at last, and none too soon, occupied the attention of the Committee; and, though he hoped no financial difficulty would ever prevent them from voting every penny that was required for the efficiency of the strongest Navy in the world, yet he hoped they would endeavour to ascertain the real grounds of the particular Estimates which the Government from time to time presented, before assuming that the enormous and increasing sums that were perpetually asked for were all of them required.

Sir EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) thought the right hon. Gentleman had very well presented what was the feeling of the Committee generally with regard to the present Navy Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman spoke in a quiet and resolute tone, but also in a tone of grave warning. The two remarkable features of the debate had been the tremendous size of the Estimates and the quiet matter-of-fact way in which they had been received. But underneath there had been a note of warning to the Admiralty that the larger the Estimates became the more incumbent it was upon them to be frank and to satisfy the House of the need for the increasing Estimates. He entirely agreed with his right hon. friend the Member for Stirling Burghs as to the Committee being prepared not to refuse the Admiralty any Vote which they put forward as necessary for the defence of the country. The Committee, as in past years, continued to give its confidence to the Admiralty; but there was a danger, if the Estimates continued to increase, of that confidence being shaken, and, once shaken, very little might serve to impel the Committee to the other extreme. He thought that what was in the mind of the Committee, as well as in that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, even more than the amount of the present Estimates, was the fear of an indefinite increase in future years. It was the fact that at present they saw no sign of the increase being arrested which had gone on so rapidly in previous years, and which was causing the gravest anxiety. Was it quite true to say that this increase in our Estimates, which did undoubtedly depend on the increases of the Estimates of other Powers, and therefore depended on the general increase of the Navies of the world, was in no sense the result of our own initiative? The hon. Member for Exeter made a very searching comment when he asked if it was quite certain that we were not in this matter sometimes leading the dance. He remembered that when the Naval Defence Act was proposed, with £21,000,000 the whole programme was put down at once, and the total sum it would cost. And the impression conveyed to the Committee at the time by Mr. Goschen was that, by naming so large a sum, we should discourage the building of other Powers. He believed the effect was exactly the opposite, and that, instead of discouraging the building of other Powers, this great effort on our part had increased the rivalry. In 1885 the standard set and maintained by Mr. Gladstone's Government was to lay down two ships for every one ship laid down by the French Government. Under the Naval Defence Act, the standard changed, and then came the two-Power standard. The two Powers were, of course, France and Russia. But why? Because those two Powers were then the two Powers which had the largest Navies. That standard must not be taken to apply to any two Powers in particular, but to the two Powers which at the time of speaking had the largest Navies. The origin of the rivalry was France. If the happy relations which existed to-day between ourselves and France had existed in previous days, was it quite certain that the French rivalry would have been so great, and was it not possible that, taking France as the second naval Power in the world, if the good relations which now existed between her and ourselves were maintained, it might have a beneficial result in reducing the rivalry between these two nations, and therefore of reducing the two-Power standard? France had stopped her increase; she had actually made reductions. It was stated somewhat emphatically in France last year that at one time she had reduced her naval force in the Mediterranean. It had occurred to him to wonder whether it would not be possible for us to make some reply, without endangering our maritime supremacy, to that step on the part of France, thus proving our readiness to follow suit. It might be quite possible that the Government of a country like France might not be willing, before its Chamber, to say it was prepared to make reductions, though it might be willing to give practical indications of its disposition to do so. If a Government such as that of France was prepared to do that, and the reduction of her Fleet in the Mediterranean was such an indication, then it was only prompt action on our part in following suit which would enable that Government to maintain its position before its own Chamber and to follow that up by carrying out those reductions as a permanent policy. He held that out rather for the future, because, of course, with this deplorable war in the Far East, it was not a favourable time to expect other countries to choose this moment for making alterations in their naval expenditure or their naval programme. But with regard to the future, when the present trouble passed away, and if our present friendly relations with France were maintained, he hoped that no opportunity would be lost of turning that friendly spirit to practical advantage by some mutual agreement with regard to stopping the increase in the Fleets. Ther emust be a reasonable interpretation of the two-Power standard. It was all very well for to-day, but supposing the United States entered into rivalry in shipbuilding? She had both hands free for that purpose. She had not got to maintain a great standing army as our Continental neighbours had. She was as free as ourselves to say any day that a big Fleet was necessary to her, and she could spend upon that what other nations spent upon their armies. If she chose to take that view, she could, of course, with her enormous population and extraordinary resources, build the greatest fleet the world had ever seen. And therefore, when they talked of the two-Power standard, the Committee ought to bear in mind that that standard must always have a reasonable interpretation, and that circumstances might arise under which policy would have to take the place of the maintenance of the two-Power standard.

With regard to the choice of naval officers, he did not entirely agree with his hon. friend the Member for Dundee. He thought the boys ought to be taken young. The experience of naval officers was preponderating, if not unanimous, on the point that they got the best naval officers by taking the boys young. If boys were taken young, then he was entirely against the idea of competitive cramming examinations, and if they did not have competitive examination they were thrown back on the system which the Admiralty had adopted. He hoped the Admiralty were making that system, as he thought they were, a system of, as far as possible, testing general ability and general knowledge. But if the House trusted them to nominate, upon them lay the responsibility to see that the nominations were dealt with without prejudice and with widespread impartiality. He was glad to hear the Secretary to the Amiralty state that there would be no increase of expense entailed on parents who wished to send their sons into the Navy, because he thought that any narrowing of the area would be exceedingly bad. He agreed with the Secretary to the Admiralty that it was not a very hopeful experiment to try to get boys from the public schools for the reasons he stated. He disagreed entirely with his hon. friend the Member for Dundee in his estimate of the public schools. His hon. friend said they gave an inkling of knowledge. He did not dispute that the English public schools had their fair proportion, but not more, of boys who had a natural disinclination for knowledge. But if his hon. friend had known more of the English public schools he would have known that the energy with which the authorities pressed knowledge upon that class of boys was sometimes carried to the point of inconvenience. He discounted some of his hon. friend's prejudice against the English public schools because he knew it was one which was shared by a great many of his hon. friends who came from the North. That it was an honest and genuine opinion on their part he had no doubt, but he did not think it was founded on very large experience, and he was bound to say that he thought it arose to a certain extent from prejudice. But for the other reasons the Secretary to the Admiralty gave, he did not think the English public schools or any public schools were a source to draw from for the Navy. If boys had to enter the Navy at sixteen or seventeen, he did not think parents would send them to public schools, and he thought, therefore, it was better to follow the confirmed opinion of officers of the Navy, that boys should be taken young without making an effort to get them from public schools.

With regard to the Reserves, he was not prepared to go beyond the decision to which the Committee, of which he was a member, came to with regard to the present introduction of short service in the Navy. He thought the Committee recommended as much as the Admiralty could well put into practice at the present, though there was room for expansion when experience justified that expansion. The Admiralty had not yet been able to bring in operation all the Committee's recommendations with regard to the new class of firemen and engine-room artificers, who were as important as any other matter connected with the Reserves. The Admiralty offered very good terms—he might say they were liberal terms, which he thought would be naturally calculated to induce men to enlist for this class of work. But something more than the offer of good terms was required. These men in the reserve class of firemen would have to be drawn from some of the greatest works in the country. They might offer good terms, they might make the men willing to engage, but unless they made arrangements with their employers they would not be able to get the men. They should do everything in their power to make it known that the Admiralty must to a considerable extent in regard to this class of reserve depend on the patriotism of the employers in the great works, many of whom derived a great part of their business direct from the Admiralty, and all of whom had a special interest in this matter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If I intervene for a few moments in this debate it is not to continue the discussion begun by my right hon. friend on the subject of the Reserve and continued by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. They speak with a knowledge on that matter to which I cannot pretend, and perhaps it is only necessary for me to emphasise what has already been so well put by my hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, that the Admiralty are working not only hard but effectively at this question and that the amount of the Reserve is gradually increasing. I do not wish to labour that point. I rather rise because a broader issue was raised by my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol, and was touched on by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, namely, the magnitude of the present Navy Estimates, and consequently, the necessity, or want of necessity, there may be in our international position for asking from the House and from the taxpayers of the country the enormous sums which I quite admit are asked for the naval power of the country. My right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol, while he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, also dwelt upon the dangers which he saw in the growing expenditure of the country, and if he spoke to the House in that sense while he was responsible for its finances, and while he was, of course, bound by the policy to which he was a party, none can complain that, in the position of freedom in which he now finds himself, he should emphasise again the lesson which he has brought to our notice before, and should impress upon the House the absolute necessity under which we are, in the public interest, of examining critically the necessity or the alleged necessity for the immense expenditure on new construction which the House is asked to sanction. I think the warning of my right hon. friend was not only perfectly justifiable in substance and perfectly moderate in tone, but was a valuable warning, and I think the House ought to watch when he sees, and they see, how the Navy Estimates are growing; and not merely the amount of the Estimates, but the general European and Asiatic situation, which alone can justify what the country is asked to expend.

The right hon. Baronet opposite cast his memory back to a time when the principle of shipbuilding in this country was that two English ships should be laid down for every single French ship. Of course that period has long passed away, and, for many years now, what has been called the two-Power standard has been in force. There is nothing sacred in the two-Power standard. There is, I fear, no absolute security that in no conceivable circumstances more than two Powers might not be ranged against us. I have certainly always interpreted the two-Power standard as meaning a two-Power standard with something of the nature of a margin. I do not believe that we have exceeded the principle I have just laid down in any programme that we have ever asked the House to sanction before, or which we are asking the House to sanction now. My right hon. friend, I think, based his comparison upon the amount of expenditure for new construction, and I think he thereby raised a very interesting point—the relative cost of construction in various countries. I may say, with regard at all events to one country, and the accuracy of the published figures as to the amount spent in that country upon new construction, that the safer estimate after all is not what the ships cost, but what ships are built, and what the ships are when built. It may be the fact—I do not think it is and I do not think we suspect it to be the fact—that our cost of building is excessive, but after all that is not the point we are now on, although it is important. The point is the strength of the Fleet we have got to provide. That is to be determined not by the amount spent in other countries, avowed or unavowed, for new construction, but upon the ships actually laid down and our estimate of the time at which the ships are likely to be completed. That is the only solid basis on which we can go; and it is on that that the Admiralty have framed their Estimates for the present year, and I imagine rightly.

Let me remind the Committee of another fact not always present in their minds, but which cannot be lost sight of. The mere fact that there are now so many more important navies in the world than there were a quarter of a century ago is in itself considerable cause for anxiety. Supposing—I hardly like even to suggest so tragic a possibility—that we were involved in war with two great maritime Powers—supposing such a war could hardly end without immense losses, immense maritime losses, immense losses in ships and material, both on the part of our enemy and on the part of ourselves. In that case other navies would possibly remain intact, and a country which had not allowed itself to be drawn into the vortex of the war would then occupy a position which they do not occupy now, and that would necessarily put their Government in a position, from the naval and maritime point of view, which they do not at present occupy. You cannot put aside that possibility. For a Minister even to mention the possibility of war is a thing which I am very reluctant to do, and I do not think for a minute that any such dreadful contingency is one that we have at present any reason to apprehend; but when we are talking of our Navy we are talking about the possibility of war, for if war were not possible we would not have a Navy; and I am forced, therefore, when I am indicating in general outlines the reasons which have compelled the Government to call, in these Estimates, on the country to make such great sacrifices, to state possibilities which did not exist twenty-five years ago, and which every year makes more important—I will not say more menacing—but, at all events, brings home more and more clearly to those who are responsible for the naval and military policy of the Empire.

Of course, it is mere commonplace, familiar to every man in this House, and which necessarily comes up in every debate, that our position in relation to the Navy is different from that of every other nation in the world. The right hon. Baronet has mentioned America. What possible comparison can there be between the dependence of America on her Navy and the dependence of Great Britain on ours. There is no comparison. And if there is no comparison in the case of America is there a comparison in the case of France? Is there a comparison in the case of Germany, which is not open to attack; or in the case of Russia, which is absolutely free from any attack by sea, except in the extreme far eastern limit of its dominions? We stand alone in the fact that our Navy is substantially and essentially a defensive force, and that the navies of most other nations, though they may have a defensive aspect, are essentially attacking and aggressive navies. Well, Sir, can we do less than what we are doing, which is to lay down our ships as other nations lay down theirs? Hon. Gentlemen appear to suppose that we start an enormous programme which is then imitated and rivalled by other nations. I do not think—I speak with deference to my hon. friends who are, of course, more familiar with the details than I am —but I do not think that has ever been done. I think that it has ever been our policy to see what other nations are doing in the way of laying down ships, and immediately to make the necessary reply. I think my right hon. friend has been justified, on financial grounds, in warning us of the dangers incidental to this great expenditure; and though I think he suggested an interesting line of investigation when he compared the cost of ship-building here and the cost in other countries, after all, what we have got to consider in discussing the amount of expenditure we have to face upon ships, is that the ships that we require—their number and their character—depend upon the ships which other nations lay down; and so long as this House is careful to see that the Admiralty does not anticipate what other nations do; that we do not, as it were, drive them on by excessive and ill-considered expenditure of our own, but that we simply follow suit and take care that they do not outstrip us in the race for naval superiority—so long, I believe, the country will support this House in the expenditure, large as it is, which we now ask, or any other expenditure which the Admiralty of the day may deem necessary. I know my right hon. friend will do me the justice to say that I am as desirous myself of diminishing the expenditure, as he is, although I think there may be, in his mind, occasions on which he would say that I had been less active in pressing that home than he could have desired. But though there may be that divergence in methods between my right hon. friend and myself in these financial matters, I do not think he will dissent from the broad principles of policy which on behalf of the Government I have ventured to lay down.

*MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said he wished to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury on his return to an active part in the discussions of the House. The anxiety shown by hon. Members who had engaged in the debate was not to cut down the power of the Navy, but to look into the great increase in the amount of the present Estimates, especially the increase in the Construction Vote, and inquire whether that was justified at the present time. The financial side of the question had been referred to at length by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, who also made reference to the large increase in the number of men that would be required. Practically every battleship added to the Fleet must mean an increase of some 600 or 700 men who must be more or less permanent additions to our forces. They must be drawn from sources which are already well drained by engineering works and the mercantile marine. The Committee must view with great apprehension the necessity for the increase in the number of men at such an enormous rate. The Secretary to the Admiralty, if he might say so, had not rightly understood the point pressed upon him from the Opposition side of the House, as well as by hon. Members on the other side of the House, with reference to the necessities of the time, so far as battleships went. They had urged that in adding the two Chilian battleships to the British Navy, it should have been possible to have dropped two vessels, not one, out of their programme. The Secretary to the Admiralty would agree with him that the only way in which they could test their strength was by taking vessels of comparatively modern design. On Monday the Secretary to the Admiralty did not restrict the figures he used to vessels of comparatively modern design. But a juster basis of estimate of strength was by taking battleships not over twenty-five years of age, and cruisers not more than twenty years of age. Taking that basis they at once eliminated a large number of out-of-date battleships that were useful merely for coast purposes, and practically nothing else. What they found was that of battleships under twenty-five years of age Great Britain in 1908 would have no less than fifty-four and Russia and France together would have fifty-nine. But even if they took another basis of comparison, namely, the armament of those vessels, this country was certainly much stronger than Russia and France put together—that was, Russia as she stood before the present war broke out. When they turned to cruisers they found that Great Britain not only worked up to the two-Power standard, which was now adopted by the Admiralty, but it worked up to four-Power standard. Taking cruisers of twenty years of age and none over that, they found that Great Britain in 1908 would have no less than seventy-one, and France, the United States, Russia, and Germany together—the four largest navies of the world, excluding our own—would have seventy-three, and even their tonnage was slightly under our own. He could, therefore, well understand that the hon. Gentleman on Monday preferred to use another standard for cruisers, namely, the dimensions of our mercantile marine. Well, if that was to be the basis of comparison in the future, he took it that our cruisers were to be increased in the same proportion as our merchant navy, that was to say, if we went on possessing one half of the merchantmen of the world, as we did at the present time, we must therefore have cruisers which were equivalent to all the other cruisers in the world put together. That was a peculiarly loose way of estimating the naval strength which this country required.

The hon. Gentleman referred at considerable length to the dangers which our food supplies ran in time of war, and, having done that, he made reference to the fact that our merchant navy amounted to something like 15,000,000 tons. That might be perfectly true, but of that 15,000,000 tons he doubted whether there was more than 3,500,000 engaged in carrying food to this country. And in that 3,500,000 he included not only British but also foreign vessels coming into our ports. If that was to be the basis of comparison, he took it for granted that the Admiralty would make their cruiser strength correspond not with our total of merchant navy, but with the proportion of our merchant navy which was engaged at the time being in supplying this country with food. If that was the case he did not see any justification for working up to a four-Power standard. In saying that he was sure the hon. Gentleman would be well aware that he would be one of the last to press on him any restriction of our naval power. But what he and others urged was that the present was not an opportune time for increasing the rate at which we were adding to the Navy. He believed that if they had gone on on their old scale they should have been adding a sufficient number, commensurate with our financial resources, to maintain our position.

The hon. Gentleman had referred to the fact that the "Lord Nelson" design was not ready—when it was likely to be he had not stated.

Mr. PRETYMAN: The new ships will be laid down in the autumn.

*Mr. RUNCIMAN said he would then ask whether the vessels of the "Lord Nelson" type which the hon. Gentleman had stated were of too great displacement, were of too great tonnage, or too great length, or too great beam, because he would obviously see that this was a very great distinction.

Mr. PRETYMAN said "all together."

*Mr. RUNCIMAN said the hon. Gentleman must be well aware that for the docking of vessels the extreme beam would place them at a great disadvantage in many of our dockyards. Might he suggest that some time must of necessity be taken for improving the "Lord Nelson" design, and the Admiralty might well have used that delay for a further postponement in order that a better design, the result of riper knowledge, might be adopted in our future programme. A further reason, which, he thought, had not been sufficiently pressed for delaying the increase of construction was that we really should recognise the fact that the balance of power had been disturbed by the war in the Far East. He did not wish to tread on any delicate international questions, but the fact was that Russia had been seriously crippled. She had lost one or two—possibly more — most valuable vessels, and that must disturb the balance of naval power. If the process went further he took it that there would be a still further diminution of those ships against which we were maintaining the two-Power standard. Moreover, the war in the Far East was likely to solve many of the problems which had been the subjects of debate in the House, at the United Service Institution and elsewhere. They did not know how far the war might show us the relative value of battleships and cruisers—a point which was not solved at the present time—or the relative value of armoured cruisers and protected cruisers. They did not know how far it might affect their policy in reference to the building of destroyers in preference to torpedo boats nor how the knowledge gained there might lead to changes of arming and design. All these were reasons for not rushing ahead. All he urged was—not the diminution of our naval strength, but that they should proceed at present with great caution, having in view the financial needs of the United Kingdom, and also the possibility of spending our money to much greater advantage twelve months, or even eighteen months, hence.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he wished to press home further the question of the three battleships of the "King Edward" type the Admiralty were about to construct. It was most important not only as regarded the policy of new construction but also as regarded finance. The First Lord of the Treasury had just stated that the best way of enforcing economy was to carefully watch the policy of new construction. He would follow that advice. The Secretary to the Admiralty stated last session that the new programme included three new battleships, that he was sorry he could not inform the House what their precise design would be, but that he could assure hon. Members they would be of a very formidable type. Yesterday, the hon. Gentleman stated that in the process of working out the design, it was found that the dimensions would be such that they could not be built in any available dockyard; therefore, their construction had not been only suspended, but abandoned. Now the Admiralty proceeded to take what appeared to be, from an Admiralty point of view and from a financial point of view, a most imprudent course. They proceeded to lay down ships in accordance with the design of the "King Edward" class which they themselves admitted was not up to the best modern ideas and which would in all probability be superseded by a superior type in a few years. On the face of it, surely that was not a wise policy. The "King Edward" was a most expensive type of battleship, and one which in the opinion of the experts would not, in a few years, be the best type available, yet we were going to spend no less than £4,500,000 in laying down and building three battleships of that type. In view of all that had been said, it was surely only common prudence to postpone the construction of those ships until we knew what was the best type to lay down.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) expressed his surprise that none of the advocates of economy who had addressed the House on this question had had the courage to move a reduction of the Vote. This, perhaps, was not the best Vote on which to move a reduction, because the increase of men in the Navy was automatic on the new construction, nevertheless he proposed, before he sat down, to move a reduction of it. Neither the Prime Minister nor the Secretary to the Admiralty had satisfied him that the two-Power standard had been adhered to. It seemed to him, whether it was regarded from the point of view of finance or of numbers of ships we more nearly approached the three-Power standard, and, while the Prime Minister assured the Committee that these Estimates were moderate and absolutely necessary for the safety of the Empire, hon. Members who had listened to the debate knew perfectly well that there had been no definite statement demonstrating the necessity for these enormous and extravagant Estimates. He was entirely opposed to this heavy burden being placed upon his country. Ireland had no use for this Navy and he did not think this enormous increase was warranted by what foreign countries were doing. It was only a provocation and a challenge to other countries to follow this extravagant example. He begged to move that the Vote be reduced by the net increase in the number this year of 4,000 men.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 127,100 men and boys be employed for the said Services. *(Mr. O'Mara.)*

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said he had hoped after the action of the Admiralty in purchasing battleships of a foreign Power that there would have been a corresponding decrease in the Estimates of this year. Instead of that not only were Supplementary Estimates required for the Navy but the Estimates generally were larger than they had been for many years and at a time unfavourable for large expenditure. Practically the amount was double what it was when he first became a Member of that House. The Prime Minister had laid down a doctrine that the fleets of other Powers were aggressive instruments while ours were defensive. In his opinion that doctrine could not be justified by anyone who looked into the facts, and certainly was no justification for an increase of the Naval Estimates of this year. He expressed his disappointment at the amount of money required for this year. There was nothing in our relations with other Powers to justify it. We stood better now than we had stood in any year during the last ten or twelve years, since Lord Spencer commenced to strengthened the Fleet. That policy had been followed by successive Boards of Admiralty until those who had any wish for economy should now cry "Halt." But he particularly wished to refer to an incident, which he mentioned, when the Fleet was in St. Andrews Bay. As that matter reflected on the officers and men of one of the ships he thought it only right that the Secretary of the Admiralty should be given an opportunity to give the facts of this regrettable incident. No one would be more pleased than he if the incident proved not to be so grave as he represented, because he did not wish to cast unnecessary blame upon those to whom they looked with pride.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he could see his way to widen the sphere of nomination for the entrance of cadets into the Navy. Several times in past years he had called attention to the unfairness of the system of nomination, and, in his opinion, that unfairness would be greatly intensified under the new plan. There was a danger that officers would become a narrow caste. They came from a very narrow basis under the old plan, but he feared the basis would be much narrower now when the nominations would be fewer. This was very unfair to other classes of the people, and would dry up the vigour and freshness of the class of naval officer. It had been admitted during the debate that more and more our ships of war were becoming floating factories, and, therefore, what was wanted was mechanical genius and skill. These qualities could be found in Lancashire, but under the system of nomination they would remain unutilised. Young men living in that and other parts of the country should be given a fair chance, but to prevent them from entering the Navy would be unfair and unwise. If the prosperity of this country depended upon the Navy it should be our object to draw to it all the talent possible. What were battleships worth if they were not properly handled? As patriots it was their duty to protest against any narrowing of the area from which naval officers were drawn and not deprive the Navy of a service so much required.

*MR. PRETYMAN, in reply, said the criticism of the hon. Member was founded upon an insufficient knowledge of the facts. So far from being narrowed, the area of original nomination was very greatly widened. Under the old scheme nomination given by the First Lord entitled the recipient to sit for the competitive examination, and it was therefore necessary that the First Lord should exercise some care as to whom he nominated. But now an application for a nomination was granted on a very much wider basis, because the recipient would come before a committee of inspection, who were not all naval men, and it was on their report that the First Lord would make the decision. That was really one of the great advantages of the new system. Every boy would have an equal chance. In answer to the hon. Member for Ilkeston the previous week with regard to the "Sutlej's" launch, he had made inquiries into the facts, which generally were as had been stated by the hon. Member, but there was considerable difference in detail. The launch of the "Sutlej" ran ashore in St. Andrews Bay at two o'clock in the morning, on a very bad reef of rocks, and her bottom was nearly torn out. She had ten or twelve holes in her, and one gentleman had written to him saying he had put his head and shoulders through one of them. She was sold at public auction for £104, and the people who bought her were lucky enough to get her off, after spending a considerable sum upon her, for £350. [Sir WALTER FOSTER: What was her original price?] Her original price was £2,500. He did not think, therefore, that the facts were of the serious nature that had been suggested.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he rose solely to follow his usual practice and protest against the expenditure on these Naval Estimates. He pointed out that the House had to discuss these Estimates in the absence of the Gentleman who should be personally responsible for them to this Committee, and he was perfectly certain no business house could be conducted successfully for twelve months if, at the annual general meeting, the finances were discussed in the absence of the person responsible for the conduct of the business. While Great Britain and Ireland were called upon to vote enormous sums in order to protect the trade, not of Great Britain and Ireland alone, but of the Empire as a whole, the rest of the Empire contributed practically nothing. It had been stated that the Navy was for the protection of the trade not of the United Kingdom but of the Empire. From the British point of view that was perfectly true. The British Empire was world-wide; its naval stations were dotted all over the globe; and its ships were in all the waters of the world for the protection of the trade of the Empire. From the British point of view it was perfectly right and proper to have a Navy for that purpose, but if that was the reason for its existence, was it common justice that the unfortunate taxpayers of Ireland, a country with no sea-going trade worth speaking of, should be called upon to pay to the fullest extent while the other portions of the Empire paid practically nothing? Such an arrangement was altogether one-sided and unjust. No one wished better to the self-governing Dependencies of the Empire than he did, but it was necessary to consider one's interests at home, and when the people of Ireland were asked to bear their share of these increased Estimates, they were entitled to demand the reason why the self-governing Colonies secured all the protection they required without paying anything in return.

Towards the £42,000,000 required this year, the Australian Commonwealth had agreed to contribute £200,000. He would make the Government an offer. On one condition he would agree to let these Estimates go through without a word spoken or question asked, without an adverse vote or any hindrance whatever, and the condition was that the people of Ireland should be put in the same position as the people of the Australian Commonwealth in this matter. Would the Government take £200,000 from Ireland as a set-off for any advantages she might derive from the Navy? The population of Ireland was little greater than that of Australia, but the Commonwealth was infinitely better able than Ireland to bear a proper share of the burden. But what did Australia get in return for her £200,000? It was not sufficient that Great Britain should undertake to defend her coasts if attacked, there was to be permanently stationed in Australian waters a whole fleet. It might be said that the Australian people would not pay more, and that the present contribution was secured only with great difficulty. That, no doubt, was perfectly true, but the fact remained that the sum was altogether insufficient, and it would be much better if the Government told the Australian people to build a Navy for themselves and to look after their own interests as best they could. He could understand such a position being taken up, but he could not understand such an arrangement as now existed being entered into. The idea of Ireland being in danger of attack from any foreign Power was farcical and absurd. He did not blame the Australians. They were perfectly right in trying to get as much for as little as possible, but from the Irish point of view the arrangement was monstrously unjust. Then Cape Colony contributed £50,000, Natal £35,000, while Newfoundland said, "We will give £3,000 a year, and you must let us have the use of the whole Navy if necessary." [AN HON. MEMBER: What about Canada?] Canada looked towards the United States, and everybody knew that if there was any trouble that colony would at once become incorporated. At least, that was his view of it. These figures were very picturesque. They reminded him very much of the cheap flags which were hung out on festive occasions to show unity, brotherhood, and good feeling. Here was a national festival for the British Empire. The English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh had hung out flags up to £41,500,000, and the Australians had hung out a flag for £200,000. It would be infinitely more dignified, and more in keeping with the spirit of independence which Englishmen were supposed to cherish, if the British people said that they would bear the expense themselves if the Colonies were not prepared to make a more reasonable, fair, and proportionate contribution. The figures were simply a mockery of the idea of Imperialism. They only went to prove that there was no real unity in the matter. The people of this country were talked to, and lectured to, over and over again, about Imperialism, Imperial unity, and thinking Imperially, but it all came down to this — they had to pay in Ireland for all this highfaluting while the people in distant parts of the Empire got the advantages. He had no ill-feeling towards the great self-governing Colonies, but was it unreasonable, in the face of these facts and figures, that Irishmen should come there and protest that they were being unfairly treated in regard to the expense of the Navy?

The naval expenditure, according to an answer to a Question put by the hon. Member for Exeter, for 1900–1 was £32,131,062; for 1901–2, £33,726,491; for 1902–3, £34,201,994, and the estimated expenditure for 1903–4 was £39,221,000, and for 1904–5, £42,001,400. He was surprised that there was so little protest in the House against the extraordinary increase in the naval expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Bristol and some others had spoken of it in misgiving tones, but nothing like a real protest had been made. The way to check it was for everyone who believed it to be wasteful and extravagant to register his vote against the proposals of the Government. He conceived it to be the duty of the Irish representatives to enter their protest in every conceivable way. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury to say what return Ireland got for this expenditure. If it were all spent in Ireland he would still object to it because he thought it was a bad way of spending money. There were dockyards and naval works in England and the greater portion of the £42,000,000 would be circulated in this country, but he ventured to say that not a brass farthing of the money would ever find its way into the constituency he represented. If the Irish people were obliged to pay a large portion of the upkeep of this enormous military and naval power their representatives were at least entitled to exercise their right of protest against it as strongly as they possibly could. He believed the two-Power standard was an untrue standard. The more the British Government spent the more people on the Continent would spend. He believed that a policy founded on justice and integrity would do a great deal more to secure this country against attack than the policy of the braggart with the big purse and the great sword who was always threatening his neighbours. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, before next year, it would be possible, in the interest of Imperialism, to place Ireland, in regard to this matter, upon the same footing as the Commonwealth of Australia. The population of Ireland was going down and their wealth was not increasing, but the claims upon their purse for the Navy and Army were always increasing. It would be reasonable to make a bargain with Ireland over this matter. Let the Government take so much, if they must take something, but do not increase the amount every year. If the First Lord of the Admiralty agreed to accept £200,000 from Ireland it might convert the Irish people to a true sense of Imperialism, and that would be a great matter. It would have the effect of facilitating the progress of the Naval Votes through this House and relieve the Secretary to the Treasury from what he considered to be the agony of the protests from the Irish Benches on this matter. It would secure the complete absence of the Irish Members from the debates on occasions like the present. If something could not be done and if he did not hear from the hon. Gentleman, he could only say that all through these Estimates, on every single Vote, he would take an opportunity of opposing what he seriously considered a grave scandal and injustice to the Irish people. He gave notice to the Secretary to the Treasury that when the Committee came to Vote 12, which contained the salaries of the First Lord and other officials at the Admiralty, he should review and renew all the protests he had made on this matter.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) said the Committee was entitled to some reply to the speech of the hon. Member for Clare.

Mr. PRETYMAN said he did not think a reply was necessary, because the matter had been fully dealt with in the general discussion. The hon. Member for Clare made a great mistake in saying that he listened to his remarks with agony. He thought the hon. Gentleman would see that the principle he advocated, that any Member should obtain remission of taxation for his constituents by asking for it, would prolong debates, and land the country in serious financial difficulties. The House and the country were generally prepared to grant this money, and he hoped a division would now be taken.

Mr. O'MARA said that the tone in which the Irish Members had been replied to was really too much. He did not threaten the officials on the Government Bench, but he would take his share in examining and criticising these Votes at any length required. He would not let a single farthing be voted unless Ireland was put in the privileged position of the self-governing Colonies, which enjoyed the protection of the Navy but did not pay for it. Canada did not pay a single red cent for the North American Squadron. The Cape of Good Hope only contributed £50,000 to the Navy while £5,000,000 had been spent on Simons Town Harbour, and a special squadron was retained at the Cape for the safety of the South African Colonies. Then the Australian Colonies only contributed £200,000 out of the £42,000,000 spent on the Fleet. Ireland was a poor country, with no sea-borne trade, compared with all these self-governing Colonies, where the population was prosperous, an increasing amount of land was being brought into cultivation, and railways were being extended. In Ireland land was going out of cultivation, the population was going down, the people were becoming poorer, and yet they had to pay £3,000,000 a year towards the Navy from which they did not derive a single benefit. He did not believe that 75 per cent. of the people of the county he represented had ever seen a ship of war, and would not care a bit if all the Navy was sunk to the bottom of the sea to-morrow. Ireland did not even get a gunboat for the protection of her fisheries, while Australia had one first class cruiser, two second class cruisers, three third class cruisers, and four sloops for the protection of her trade. He should continue to press the claims of Ireland to special exemption in regard to this Vote.

MR. FLAVIN said that the right hon. Gentleman had stated that the Navy was equal to the two-Power standard; but if that were so then the Estimates should be only £30,000,000 instead of £42,000,000. He asked the attention of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty to the question of protecting Irish fisheries. Why had the request of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries for the use of a gunboat to protect the Irish fisheries not been granted?

MR. PRETYMAN said that there were two gunboats and the coastguard cruisers available for that purpose.

MR. FLAVIN said he was not prepared to accept the explanation. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh, but he asked how many of them had gone out on an Irish smack off the Irish coast and fished for mackerel or herring? A very large majority of the boats which came to the Irish coast for fish were foreign.

Mr. PRETYMAN rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 224; Noes, 131. (Division List, No. 32.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. SirH
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt.Hn. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn.J.A(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar,Sir T.R.(TowerHamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur

Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greville, Hon. Ronald

Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)

Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton

Kemp, Lieut.-Col. George
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees

Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law,Andrew Bonar(Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn.G. (Yorks, N. R)L
Lee, A H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H (Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt.Hn.Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J.Scott (Hants.
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Ridley, Hon. M.W.(Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wortley, Rt.Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter,Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson,Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James

Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Marold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas, D, Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan

Question put accordingly, "That 127,100 men and boys be employed for the said Services."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 87; Noes, 247. (Division List No. 33.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Johnson, John Gateshead)
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allen, Charles P.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn Sir H
Austin, Sir John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander

Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T.Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar,Sir T.R.(TowerHamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt. E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. FrederickWm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Milner, Rt. Hn.Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isleof Wight)
Seton-Karr Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Wallace, Robert
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)

Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

MALICIOUS INJURIES (IRELAND).

*MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) said it was a very common fallacy in this country to imagine that the laws in England and Scotland were the same as those in Ireland. It was true that a great many people in this country recognised that when coercion was passed for Ireland a distinct statute was applied to that country, but when coercion was not in force the notion prevailed that the laws in both countries were the same. The subject which he now brought up before the House was a standing refutation of that fallacy under which the English people lived. Since the days of the grand jury system followed by the Local Government Act, there was in Ireland a law with regard to malicious injuries which had no parallel in this country, by which compensation could be levied on districts for malicious injuries which had been caused in other districts a considerable distance away. In the days of the grand juries those malicious injury claims were treated in a slightly different way. When the Local Government Act was passed the power formerly vested in the grand juries was transferred to the County Court Judges, but that was not all, for the County Court Judges were given a power which did not previously reside in the grand juries. Under the grand jury system where the presentment for malicious injury was disallowed and the Judge gave leave to traverse, the case had to be tried by a jury, but under the Local Government Act there need not be a jury in any case unless the Judge thought fit to have one. Formerly, also, compensation could only be given for maliciously setting fire to, or destroying, or injuring a particular kind of property mentioned in the Statute of William the Fourth, but under the Local Government Act compensation might be obtained for setting fire to or injuring any kind of property. The real mischief in the present system, however, lay not so much in the actual power given to the County Court Judges as in the way in which those powers had been applied. The principle, he contended, was absolutely wrong, and even if similar power existed in England he would hold it was wrong, but his case was strengthened by the fact that no such power existed either in England or Scotland.

He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman Sir John Colomb was not in his place as one of the cases he intended to lay before the House occurred on his property in county Kerry. It was a claim for malicious burning near Kenmare. The amount of the claim was £200. In the first place the claim was not lodged in time as laid down by the statute, but this the County Court Judge overruled. Now this particular fire, started at six o'clock, was only about 400 yards from the house of the caretaker upon a particular evicted farm. No effort whatever was made to extinguish the flames until one o'clock the next morning. When the matter came before the Court evidence was given that, some days previously to the fire, members of the caretaker's family were seen setting fire to bushes and heather not far from where the fire originated. The compensation granted amounted to £180. It might be imagined that the compensation so granted would have been levied upon the district concerned. The curious thing was that three of the townlands in the immediate vicinity were exempted from the rate levied to raise the amount of the compensation, while the people of a district ten miles away were made to pay for the damage done. What was more remarkable still was that these three townlands exempted from the rate were practically in the entire occupation of the right hon. Baronet Sir John Colomb. The next case which he desired to bring under the notice of the House was that of a man named De Caen in county Galway. A man who lived in the neighbourhood of De Caen wanted to remove furze from his land by setting fire to it. By some accident the fire extended to De Caen's land and set fire to some heather and furze. A few days after a man in the employment of De Caen burned some heather upon De Caen's holding. An application was made to the County Court Judge for compensation, and Judge Anderson awarded De Caen £100 compensation. An appeal was lodged and then the judgment was reversed as regards the burning done by De Caen's own man, but £50 was granted for the damage done by the neighbour's fire. This man was not satisfied, because the next year he alleged two of his sheep were stolen. He lodged a claim and was allowed £5. An appeal was again taken, and as one of the missing sheep, which had only strayed away, turned up in the interval the appeal, needless to say, was upheld. As far as he, Mr. Boland, knew there was no instance on record previously, even in grand jury times, of compensation being given in the case of sheep stealing.

There was no law on the Statute-book of England in any way comparable with the law at present existing in Ireland with regard to malicious injuries. In Dublin a man wishes to go into jail. He simply breaks Todd Burns' window; he is sent to prison, and the ratepayers are made to pay for the malicious injury. There need be no riot whatever. The whole country in England some time ago was astounded at the revelations that came from certain districts in the Midlands in which a solicitor named Edalji was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment for maliciously injuring and maiming cattle. That man was tried and sent to prison, but there was no question of compensation being levied in the district. But in Ireland, no matter whether a man was convicted and sent to prison, or not, the district was made to pay for the injuries. There was no such law in Scotland, and in neither England or Scotland was there any parallel to the state of the law on this matter as it existed in Ireland to-day. Under the Hundred Act of 1827, which was the nearest parallel in England, a state of riot was a necessary condition precedent, and that Act was repealed in 1886. The whole principle of this law was wrong from the very beginning. The laws affecting the landlords' property in Ireland were very much more difficult to be revised or repealed than the laws of a similar character in England. Political reasons were at the bottom of this, because in order to keep up British rule in Ireland against the will of the people, they had to try to keep the landlords there, and of this he was certain, that if peasant proprietary had existed, say, fifty years ago, this law would not be now found on the Statute-book, and what was more he was sure that the utmost pressure would be brought, in the landlords' interest in Ireland, to secure that so long as peasant proprietary was not universal, there should be no change in the law. This really was a coercion Act, and different from anything applying in England or Scotland. Was it not unjust and, in fact, absurd now, when things were so peaceable in Ireland, to continue the fiction that the people there were living in a state of continuous riot? He did not know what the right hon. Gentleman would do to-night, but if he did not see his way to assimilate the law in Ireland on this subject to that of England, let him, for the information of English people, bring in a law somewhat to the effect that, whereas the people of England had ceased, since the year 1827, to live in a state of riot, but the people of Ireland were still in that condition, and would so remain, until the last landlord had sold his property, the Law relating to malicious injuries in Ireland would remain in force as a proof of the equal laws under which the two countries were governed. If the right hon. Gentleman would not give immediate legislation, at all events let the world see that the contention that they were governing Ireland and England by equal laws was a sham and a farce.

*MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.) rose to second the Motion. In his opinion, the principle of this Act was applied to

Ireland, simply because that country was governed by a people who did not know the country and cared very little about it. Even if the provisions of the law in principle were not objectionable the law was objectionable in its application. Under the grand jury system there were numerous cases in which a rate was struck in a district, and where townlands occupied by known supporters of the ascendency party in Ireland were deliberately omitted from the levy of the rate. It might be said that these persons were omitted because it was pretty well known to the grand jury that the occupiers of those lands did not perpetrate the outrage, but in that case other people ought to have a right to claim that they should be omitted from the levy if they also could prove that they were innocent. This system of levying a rate over a district for malicious injury, under the present law in Ireland, had been handed over to the jurisdiction of the county court, which was no doubt a judicial tribunal, but it was a very curious fact that on the passing of the Local Government Act in 1898, which gave over the powers of the grand juries to the county councils, it should have been discovered that this was a judicial and not an administrative proceeding.

Many Members of the House would remember a rather notorious case which occurred in his own constituency. It was an effort made by the Midland Railway Company to make the ratepayers of the county pay the insurance for accidents on the railway. An accident took place on the Roscommon and Mayo Branch of the railway, one life was lost, several passengers were injured, and a good deal of damage was done to the train and the line. There was not the slightest trace of malice having caused that accident, but the Midland Railway Company lodged the claim for some thousands of pounds to cover the damage. The representatives of the unfortunate man killed could not make any application for compensation, nor the people who were injured. The county council was put to an enormous expense for their defence as if they were criminals, but they had to make a defence, as the case was a test one involving a great principle and the character of the district. They brought eminent counsel to the Quarter Sessions and the Judge, who, in the early proceedings, was rather inclined to favour the views of the railway company, in the end threw out the claim of the railway company, which appealed. The appeal was heard by the Chief Baron, and here, again, the railway company brought forward the best counsel they could get. The county council had to do likewise, and the neighbouring county council of Galway had also to be represented. In the end the application of the railway company was thrown out and the county council got £36 costs against the railway company. But the bill of the solicitors to the county council came in the other day, and it amounted to £500. That took no account of the expenses incurred by the county council of Galway. This case illustrated what was going on all over Ireland. The ratepayers were put to considerable expense to prove their innocence, or rebut the evidence of persons whose property had been injured. He had not the slightest doubt that the Attorney-General believed that this law was grossly abused by people who set fire to their own property and then came forward and made application for compensation against the county council. If a lawyer whispered in a casual sort of way the word "boycott" at the hearing of the case, or said that the man was not popular in the district, immediately—it did not matter what kind of evidence there was—the application was granted, and compensation was levied on the county.

Now, why should innocent people be put to all this trouble, annoyance, and expense when there was no such law in England? Everybody knew that Ireland was far more crimeless than this country. The Chief Secretary last year quoted statistics to show that Ireland was the most crimeless country in the world. There was more crime in one county in England in a year than in the whole of Ireland, including agrarian offences. But, even if the law was the same in both countries, the principle of it was wrong. He asked the Attorney-General to give the most serious consideration to this matter, and if the right hon. Gentleman did not defend the principle of the law—and he did not see that the Attorney-General could—and if he could not prove that there was anything exceptional in the amount and character of crime in Ireland over what existed in England, then he should make the law of Ireland similar to what it was in this country. Since the passage of the Local Government Act, whenever a window was broken, the insurance company actually insisted that, before they paid the money, the owner of the house damaged should make application for compensation to the city or county. If the counties were to be treated as insurance companies for the owners of property, the premiums should be paid to the ratepayers. Some provision was made by the Irish law by which, where a magistrate or police officer was injured in the discharge of his duty, he could be compensated at the expense of the rates. There was a case recently in Westmeath where a policeman was struck on the head in trying to arrest a drunken man, and he made application to the county for a sum of £800 as compensation for his injury. He thought it right that a policeman injured in that way should be compensated in some sort, but why should there not be an insurance fund for the purpose amongst the policemen themselves? Or why should he not take the risk of his well-paid position? Why should innocent people have to pay for it? One could understand this law if it applied only in the case of a general riot, where the whole people of the county sympathised with the rioters. For instance, an hon. Member for Wales paid a visit to the city of Birmingham, where a general riot took place, considerable damage was done to property, and ninety policemen injured. The general body of the people of Birmingham, sympathised with the rioters, and one could have understood it if the ratepayers had been made to pay compensation; but not a single farthing was levied on the rates for compensation to the policemen or the owners of the damaged property. But in Ireland, if a riot occurred, and the sympathies of the people were altogether against the rioters, the ratepayers were nevertheless mulcted in large figures and a great burden imposed on the rates under this unparalleled law. He had much pleasure in seconding the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has come for a revision of the Law which enables compensation for malicious injuries to be levied in Ireland on particular districts, involving an unjust and iniquitous burden on innocent persons." —(*Mr. Boland.*)

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) said he wished to support the Motion moved by the hon. Member for Kerry in a speech of great moderation, and, therefore, of all the more force. Strange as it might seem, he preferred the administration of this Malicious Injury Law under the old grand jury system to that under the present Act. Under the old law, when a malicious injury occurred, it was dealt with at the Presentment Sessions, where the magistrate had associated with him a number of cesspayers. These, representing the ratepayers, in many cases stood between them and the imposition of a large amount of compensation. From that point of view it was much more preferable to go before the grand jury than before a County Court Judge to whom it was only necessary to mention the word "boycott" to make him give compensation. It was one of the greatest blots on the Local Government Act that a body to whom was entrusted the collection of £40,000 or £50,000 of the ratepayers' money should be put in the dock by anyone who thought that he had sustained a malicious injury. He believed that many cases of malicious injury were bogus claims, and that the burning of hay and corn was frequently the result of fire bugs. In the county of Longford as much as 6s. 6d. in the £ had been assessed on an unfortunate townland where a malicious case happened to be brought up. Within the last two years there was a case connected with the burning of a shop, which was not a shop at all, but a small counter at the end of a thatched house. A sum of £100 was claimed against the rural council, and the whole house and its contents were not worth £100. There was not a single scintilla of evidence that anybody had been seen near the place. All that was known was that in the middle of the night a fire broke out. A policeman was put forward to prove malicious injury, and all that he could say was that he "believed" that this was a case of malicious burning. And the result was that a sum of 5s. 6d. in the £ was assessed on the district. Then there was a case where a townland was assessed for the destruction of a horse which had been drowned in a bog through stress of weather. By a stretch of imagination on the part of some of the witnesses it was said that there was ill-feeling against the owner of the horse, and the ratepayers had to pay. One of the worst features of the Act was the facilities it gave to policemen to recover large sums of money from the ratepayers. In Mullingar a madman fired a shot in the direction of a policeman, and a few pellets lodged in the calf of the policeman's leg. The policeman lodged a claim for compensation against the county council. Had there been any imputation of serious results, the people of Longford might have been mulcted in a sum ranging from £300 to £800. There was, he submitted, no justification for continuing this part of the Local Government Act in its present shape. The right hon. Gentleman had been challenged to defend it either in principle or in practice. He could not defend it in principle because there was no similar law in force in England, and it certainly could not be defended in practice seeing how ridiculously it worked. It imposed a cruel fine on people who were not guilty of any offence and it put a premium on blackguardism which the ordinary law of the land ought to be able to deal adequately with. Further than that, when once a claim for malicious injury had been lodged, the police rested on their oars and made no further attempt to bring to justice the perpetrators of the crime. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman wonld show some indication of willingness to meet them in that matter. At least let him concede the right to have a jury to sit with the County Court Judge. Let him take away from the County Court Judge the absolute power to decide these cases distinct from the evidence and on lines dictated by prejudice and political bias. Let the right hon. Gentleman try and remove some of the distrust with which this provision of the Irish Local Government was regarded in Ireland.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) said this afforded another illustration of the mischief worked by laws passed by this Parliament presumably for the benefit of the Irish people. He would like to tell the House how the city of Limerick suffered from these claims for malicious injury. In two years alone it had had to pay compensation to the extent of £624 16s. Some time ago there was a riot in Limerick originating in a strike, in connection with which some blacklegs had been imported to take the places of the men on strike. The blacklegs were assaulted and the police went to their assistance. In the disturbance Sergeant Mullens, R.I.C., was struck by a stone believed to have been thrown by a woman. The missile hit him over the eye. He went into the hospital and claimed compensation for the injury he had received. Evidence was given to the effect that the eye was irretrievably ruined and that he was in danger of losing the sight of the other eye. The learned County Court Judge who sat in Limerick, and than whom there was no fairer Judge in all Ireland, awarded the sergeant £500 as against the city of Limerick. The man got his money and retired from the force on a good pension and promptly married a buxom widow and thriving public house. Twelve months afterwards some strangers came into the city to attend an athletic gathering. In the evening there was a row—in which none of the citizens were concerned—and another police sergeant was injured. He, too, put in a large claim against the city, but the learned County Court Judge having learned that Sergeant Mullens had duly recovered his eyesight only awarded the second sergeant £75. But he thought that in each case injustice was done to the citizens of Limerick. Now for some reasons soldiers stationed at Limerick were anxious to get out of the Army, so they indulged in plate-glass window smashing at some of the large establishments in the city. For that they were sent to gaol and no doubt subsequently attained their object of being drummed out of the Army, but the ratepayers were mulcted time and again for the mischief they had done, in one case a claim being made for £34. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in his light and airy fashion, had accused him of having been misinformed, as the claim was only £24. But as a matter of fact the right hon. Gentleman was himself misinformed, and he could only say that if he were the Chief Secretary—and he might be some day in a Home Rule Parliament—he would, if his officials gave him wrong information, hang half a dozen of them. What he wanted to urge was that this provision of the Irish Local Government Act was inflicting an intolerable burden on the ratepayers, and he earnestly trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would that day give them some practical proof of his sympathy by undertaking to repeal this obnoxious provision.

*Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) also supported the Motion. As chairman of an Irish county council he naturally felt deeply interested in this question—a question of such vital importance to the ratepayers of Ireland and their representatives on the various councils created by the Local Government Act. The retention of the clause in his opinion could not be defended or even justified. He would much prefer that system which obtained under the old grand jury laws to the present state of affairs. The former practice was that when a claim for malicious injuries was made it was first lodged before the Presentment Sessions—a body composed jointly of the magistrates and cesspayers of the barony in which the outrage was alleged to have occurred. After consideration by that tribunal the claim went before the grand jury, which adjudicated upon it. The aggrieved party had a right of appeal from the decision of the grand jury to the Judge of Assize, and, if he wished, the assistance of a petty jury could be invoked. The Act of 1898 had altered all that and put the power of deciding claims for malicious injury in the hands of the County Court Judge. There was of course an appeal to the judge of Assize, but for the petty jury a special jury had been substituted and it was composed usually of the understrappers and hirelings of the landlords of the locality instead of poor ratepayers of the county. Hence he averred that the old order of things was preferable to the new, and he considered that the provision, as it stood, constituted a serious blot on the Irish Local Government Act of 1898. The county councils of Ireland had taken over more duties than were ever performed by their predecessors, and yet this one function of investigating claims for malicious injuries was not entrusted to them. The clause dealing with this matter was a blot and a stain on the Act which should be removed as soon as possible. As an instance of how the system worked he cited a case in which a police officer endeavoured to persuade a man to fall into the river in order that he might rescue him and thereby gain promotion from his superiors. The man refused, but shortly afterwards the policeman in some mysterious fashion had the top of his thumb shot off, and was awarded £500 compensation, although everybody in the district, including the resident magistrate, believed that the policeman shot it off himself. The duty of investigating these cases was now placed on the County Court Judges. But who were these gentleman? So far as Sligo was concerned, the County Court Judge was a gentleman who had more than once publicly expressed his contempt for the public bodies created by the Act, had ridiculed every Land Act since 1881, had no trust in the people, and, in the *Nineteenth Century* for May, 1903, had described the Land Act of last year as "an elaborate scheme of ingenious but pernicious agrarian quackery, pregnant with many and far-reaching evils." Was that a proper tribunal before which such cases could be taken? Was it to be wondered at that the Sligo County Council had a standing resolution that every claim for malicious injuries, no matter what it was, should be defended, as they had no confidence whatever in this tribunal? Very good results had accrued from that policy, but it was one involving much expense and loss to the ratepayers. In 1901 there were 175 appeals against the decisions of County Court Judges in regard to claims for malicious injuries; the decrees were confirmed in sixty-three cases, twenty-seven judgments were varied (which in this case meant reduced), thirty-four were reversed, thirty-five dismissals were confirmed, and sixty-eight reversed. The total amount of the claims was £59,982, out of which £14,129 was finally granted, leaving a balance of £45,853 which could only be considered as being fraudulently claimed. His own county had paid £1,842 out of a total claimed of £3,180, of which £1,000 was paid in respect of a few acres of heather and briars, a fire probably caused by the carelessness of a passing smoker. Ulster had paid £3,974 out a total claimed of £11,536. According to the Parliamentary Return, Sligo was crimeless, not one single case has been reported from the county, and yet the county council was engaged year after year in defending these claims for malicious injuries which could only be described as fraudulent and frivolous. It was too bad; the money could be much better employed. The retention of the clause in the Act implied a want of confidence in the local authorities which was hardly justified by the flattering reports periodically furnished by the Government auditors and inspectors. In the interests of the ratepayers of Ireland and in the interest of the good name of the country he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would remove this blot from the Act and give the county councils the right to investigate these claims. No loss would be suffered, as there would remain the right of appeal, but it would show that the local authorities were at least trusted, and he hoped for the sake of the fair fame of Ireland the Chief Secretary would give his consideration to the matter.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked whether the attention of the Attorney-General had been directed to the fact that since the passage of the Act of 1898 there had been a regular epidemic of window-breaking in Dublin, and to the language of the Recorder of Dublin on the subject. The rates of Dublin were high enough in all conscience; they had reached breaking point; things could not go much further without serious consequences. If the police could not control these people who broke windows to get into gaol, the shopkeepers ought to be compelled to insure their windows and the insurance companies to pay for the damage. The ratepayers could not bear the strain, and it was an imposition which ought not to be cast upon them. He hoped his right hon. friend would be able to hold out some prospect of relief in that direction.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.) referred to the breaking of windows and the perpetration of robberies by soldiers in the town of Bray. Although the soldiers were arrested and sent to prison, the ratepayers had had to pay for their blackguardism. There was no justification for such a system, and he thought the people of Ireland were entitled to demand the removal of this intolerable burden on the ratepayers. It was a most remarkable fact hat since the passage of the Local Government Act there had been, throughout Ireland, most frequent burnings of heather and gorse. In his own locality a landlord had his heather burnt, and obtained £400 compensation. The local authority were rather doubtful whether it was done maliciously, but they took no action. The next year the landlord had another fire, and obtained further damages. When in the third year another claim was made suspicions were aroused; strong action was taken, the claim was thrown out, and from that day to this there had been no further burnings. In several cases it had become the regular practice to set fire to useless heather in order to secure damages from the ratepayers. In some instances where they believed the people to have been badly treated, they had come to the conclusion that the police were not doing their duty. Outrage after outrage occurred in one particular district; the police were changed; fresh men were brought in; and no further outrages had occurred. He did not say that the police committed the outrages themselves, but they were certainly in touch with the guilty parties. It was a gross injustice that this clause should be allowed to remain on the Statute-book. The County Court Judge or the Judge of Assize knew nothing about the local circumstances of the case, whereas the local authority had all the local knowledge necessary to do justice in such matters.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) quite admitted that there was a gross abuse of the law involved in the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, but as long as it was the law that the infliction of malicious injuries entitled the owner of the injured property to compensation, it was impossible to draw distinctions as to individuals or the motives of individuals. If one man wantonly broke a window out of ill-will to the owner, and another man broke a window in order to get sent to prison, it was hard to say upon what principle compensation should be given in the first case and not in the second. He quite admitted that it constituted a gross abuse of the law that the ratepayers should be obliged to pay damages for such injuries as the breaking of windows by people whose only motive was to go to gaol instead of the workhouse. If those people were destitute then the workhouse was the place for them, but if the condition of things was such that they prefered the gaol to the workhouse the obvious remedy was to make the gaol less agreeable than the workhouse.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said these poor people looked upon the gaol as a kind of hydropathic establishment, and the longer term they were sentenced for the better they were pleased.

Mr. ATKINSON said he thought it was a gross abuse when persons committed a crime simply for the purpose of being committed to prison. The Recorder of Dublin had it very much in his own hands; he could inflict a severer punishment. Another grievance which he had keenly felt, was that if a man paid insurance premiums which covered, not only accidental loss, but loss from malicious injury, the insurance companies would not pay for such loss until the sufferer had first tried his luck before the grand jury. A similar section was contained in the Riot and Damage Act of 1886 in England, which provided that if any person had sustained a loss, anything he received by way of insurance should be deducted from the amount he recovered from the community. It was quite obvious that it was very easy to evade that provision, and the only way to guard against that was to allow an insurance only to cover accidental loss and not malicious loss. He thought the law ought to be changed so as to provide that where an individual insured his property and the premiums bound the company to compensate him for loss of any kind, he should get the value for which he had paid. Passing from those cases to the general matters referred to, he understood that the hon. Gentleman who had made this Motion objected first of all to the law and next to its mode of administration. The hon. Member had stated that this law was peculiar to Ireland. In a sense he was right. He observed in the discussion of Irish matters that when hon. Members opposite were opposing any liability on Ireland it was always asserted that it was identical with this country, but when it came to anything that Ireland needed the ground was put forward that it was entirely dissimilar.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): You are not talking to children.

Mr. ATKINSON said that during the last few years there had been a good deal of special legislation for Ireland. In England and in Ireland, for many years, any injury inflicted upon property by any unlawful, riotous, or tumultuous assembly entitled the owner of the property injured to compensation from the community, and the mode in which he got it was by a suit in which the person who had to pay was sued. In England a person whose property was injured owing to unlawful riots sought compensation from the police authorities and could sue and recover from them the amount of compensation to which he was entitled. In Ireland, if they placed the county councils in the position of the grand juries, then the county councils would be at once judges and defendants. But each party in Ireland had the right of appeal to a Judge from the County Courts, and if they desired, the case could be tried by a special jury.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL asked if the right hon. Gentleman could give one case in which a special jury had been applied for.

Mr. ATKINSON said if this law had never been used he failed to see the harm of it. Upon what principle was compensation awarded?

Mr. BOLAND said his argument was that this Act was wrong in principle, and even if it were administered in England in the same way he should still hold that it was wrong in principle.

Mr. ATKINSON said he understood the hon. Member to mean that the whole system of compensation for malicious injury was wrong in principle. The principle was not peculiar to Ireland for it was also adopted in England, in fact it was the same principle that underlay the law which, in this country, gave compensation for damages through riot and unlawful assembly. What was the principle of that Act? The principle on which a man was compensated by the community for injuries caused by riots or unlawful assembly was that members of the community were parties to the crime. That was the principle of the English law, and of the Irish law, which went further. That was the principle in England. Upon what principle did they compensate a man whose house was injured through a riot unless on the principle that when a riot took place the community should be mulcted with the object of preventing such things or of bringing the perpetrators to justice. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: This is not a riot.] The Irish law he quite admitted went beyond the English law because it was not necessary that the injury should be done either by an unlawful assembly or by a riot, although that law existed in Ireland just as in England. In Ireland, however, in addition, there were a number of Statutes which gave compensation when the injury was done by individuals. He wished to deal with the two branches of the subject referred to by the hon. Member. He did not intend to go into detail in regard to the cases referred to, five of which had been mentioned. The Judge who tried the cases held a different opinion to the hon. Member, and he preferred the opinion of the Judge who had heard both sides. Two of the cases failed and two of them were dismissed upon appeal, which showed how effective the appeal was. The hon. Member stated that it was very iniquitous that the county council should have to pay the costs, but they were not the only people who had to pay costs, and the same thing might happen to any member of the community who was called upon to defend himself. He could not charge his memory with any objection of this kind being made in 1898, when all these matters were threshed out. No suggestion was then made that a tribunal should be established in which it was suggested that the county council should be the judge and the defendant at the same time. Therefore, the only available tribunal was the County Court, and no hon. Members who had taken part in the debate had been able to suggest any other tribunal unless they put it into the hands of the county council. If a fraction of what hon. Members said was true, Ireland must contain the greatest collection of knaves in Christendom, for, according to the account of hon. Gentlemen, men were to be found, in all directions, in Ireland ready to burn their own ricks and hough their own cattle. [NATIONALIST cheers and cries of "Sheridan."] The knaves of course got the swag. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: "What about Sheridan?"] They might quote Sheridan if they liked as an accomplice.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): He was not an accomplice, for he did it.

MR. ATKINSON said there were men who were burning their own ricks and houghing their own cattle and making fraudulent claims. He did not call that a fair representation of the conditions in Ireland. He believed that exaggerated and dishonest claims were sent in, but the proceedings of the Courts showed what the results of the investigations had been. He would call attention to the variation of these claims according to the condition of the country. He thought that anybody who had any aquaintance with Ireland must be ready to admit that in a time of public excitement when there was anything like organised crime and malicious injury [NATIONALIST cries of "Oh"] to property which invariably accompanied it—[AN HON. MEMBER: "Government spies" and Nationalist cheers.]

*MR. SPEAKER: I hope hon. Members will allow the right hon. Gentleman to answer their arguments without these continual interruptions.

MR. ATKINSON said that the Return for 1900, which covered the year 1899, showed that the claims in respect of persons were thirty-seven, and in respect of property 1,072. The amount of compensation claimed in respect of persons was £13,320, and in respect of property £14,927. The County Courts granted £3,393 in respect of persons and in respect of property £14,000. The amount of claims dismissed was £10,826. Out of a total of £42,000 the sum allowed was only a little over £17,000. These figures tended rather to show that the claims were carefully sifted by the County Courts. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: How many of the persons were policemen?] He did not propose to go into the question whether all the police in Ireland were perjurers and conspirators. In the next year 1901, which covered 1900, the statistics showed that the claims in respect of persons fell to twenty-one, and the claims in respect of property to 896. The amount claimed in respect of persons was £6,001, and the amount claimed in respect of property was £39,922. The sum awarded to persons was £1,128, and the sum awarded in respect of property was £13,000. The amount of claims dismissed was £30,000. In 1902, things were becoming more peaceable. The Returns for that year covered 1901 the claims were eight in respect of persons, and 666 in respect of property. The personal claims amounted to £2,350 and the claims in respect of property £30,000. The amount of compensation granted was only £280 in respect of persons, and £7,997 in respect of property.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Out of the 666 cases to which the right hon. Gentleman refers how many were dismissed altogether?

MR. ATKINSON: I cannot tell you.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Can the right hon. Gentleman say how many of these cases arose out of riots or tumultuous assembly?

MR. ATKINSON: I have not the particulars here.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): The right hon. Gentleman stated that in 1902 things were becoming more peaceable in Ireland. If that is so, may I ask why the Coercion Act was reintroduced?

MR. ATKINSON said it was quite clear that in 1900 things had come to a climax, and that in 1901 and 1902 the claims decreased. The appeals to the Assize Court in 1900 were 122; in 1901, 175; and in 1902, 111. In some instances the Judges of Assize confirmed the awards of the County Courts, in other cases the awards were decreased, and in a number of cases the claims were withdrawn. It was interesting to look at the counties in which these things took place. In 1901, in Ulster, the gross amount was £3,974, and in the next year it was only £1,816. In Munster the gross amount awarded in 1901 was £4,829, and in the next year it was £3,758. With regard to cities and counties, it was most instructive to look at the figures. In 1901 the amount in the city of Dublin altogether was only £168, while in Clare it was £380. If they went through the figures it would be apparent that it was in the counties that most of the compensation was given.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say, as he has referred to county Clare, that some of the outrages committed there, and supposed to be malicious, were afterwards found to have been committed by Police-Sergeant Sheridan, who has now fled the country.

MR. ATKINSON said he did not at all agree with the hon. Member. Sergeant Sheridan could never have done the whole of the injuries. He only referred to the figures for the purpose of showing the serious injury that was inflicted upon individuals. Nineteen-twentieths of the compensation was in respect of property and not of persons. The figures showed that the principal injuries were inflicted in the rural districts, and they all knew what they were. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Sheridan's work.] They were face to face with the question whether they would give no compensation to these people and allow them to be pauperised, as they would be in a great many cases, and therefore to fall upon the rates, or whether, as they had undoubtedly suffered injury, that injury would be thrown on the community. He did not want to-night to endeavour to trace these injuries to their origin or to find out what class was guilty. He simply wanted to put this point. If they had in Ireland damage to the extent of £14,000 per annum inflicted mainly on farmers the question was, "Will you allow them to go without any compensation at all, and throw that loss entirely on their own resources, or will you adopt the expedient of compensating them by the community which must contain the individual who committed the damage?" He did not think that any reasonable person could say that things in Ireland at the present time were as satisfactory as could be wished. There might be good times in store for Ireland, but as things were at present every impartial man must admit that the law of compensation for malicious injuries could not safely be abolished. He made every allowance for the exaggeration of claims, but he did not think it was fair to make widespread charges that fraudulent claims were presented. He admitted that if a man lost a cow which was only worth £10 he might claim £20, but he must say he did not think that instances of men putting forward claims for property which they had themselves burnt or inflicted damages upon, existed to the degree which hon. Members had suggested. Exaggeration there unquestionably was, but he did not believe such cases of deliberate fraud as had been suggested existed at all.

It had been contended that the fact that compensation was given did not act as a deterrent to crime. He did not think any person could suppose that the fact that a particular community was aware that there was a possibility of being mulcted for compensation for malicious injury, did not act as a serious preventive of crime. He quite admitted that it might not succeed in bringing the criminal to justice, but it did act in the way of preventing the commission of crime, and it prevented the pauperising of individuals who were injured when crime was committed. He had known many cases where the injuries inflicted on farmers were so serious that they could not afford to bear the loss. As the Government thought that this law prevented crime and saved the persons injured from severe loss they could not promise, in the present state of Ireland, that the law would be repealed. And, so long as the law remained in force, he could not conceive a more satisfactory tribunal than that which at present existed for adjudicating on claims. With regard to damage caused by soldiers he would say, that whatever else might be the defects of this law, it seemed to raise the market for widows in Limerick. He had not particulars here, but there was a

Limerick case which was still *sub judice*, and he did not like to go into that at present. During the past five years there were eleven cases of injury committed by soldiers in Limerick, and the amount decreed for compensation was £7 10s. The soldiers contributed £5 12s. 6d. themselves, for the purpose of recouping the county, so that very little loss fell on the community so far as injury done by these soldiers was concerned.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said he had never known the right hon. and learned Gentleman take part in an Irish debate without bringing bitterness of feeling and exasperation into the discussion. What had he done to-night? His hon. friend the Member for South Kerry brought this question before the House in a speech of studied moderation. It was a case where the law was different in England and Ireland, and he made out a reasonable case for an amendment of the law. The right hon. and learned Gentleman got up and, apparently with deliberate intention, proceeded to inflame feeling on this side of the House by talking of organised crime and outrages committed on cattle, although he well knew that Ireland was, and had been for a considerable time, in a state of profound peace. The right hon. Gentleman knew that Ireland was in a state of profound peace. He knew that was a matter beyond dispute, for it was to be found in the statistics of the Blue-books, that so far as ordinary crime was concerned, Ireland to-day was more crimeless than England, Scotland, and Wales. And yet he came down to this House and met this reasonable case by an appeal to organised crime and cattle maiming, quite forgetful of the fact that the last case proved in Ireland was the case of a policeman in the employ of the Government, who, having obtained the conviction of an innocent man on a horrible charge of mutilating cattle, had his crime subsequently found out, and instead of being put on his trial was allowed to escape from the country scot free, while his accomplices actually received large sums of money in the shape of what were called "compassionate allowances." He did not want to be unreasonable, and perhaps it would be unreasonable to complain of the Chief Secretary leaving this matter in the hands of the Attorney-General. He knew that a man in the position of the Chief Secretary for Ireland had heavy labours thrown upon him, and he could not always be expected to be present, but he would appeal to his common sense not to allow the Attorney-General to conduct Irish debates in this House. The Attorney-General might be a most valuable member of His Majesty's Government, but he would suggest that he should be set apart to devote his brilliant talents to the discussion of fiscal questions and matters of Imperial concern, but where mere Irish matters were concerned he thought that the Chief Secretary should attend to them himself, or at any rate not leave them to a man who never made a speech in which there was one particle of sympathy for the country from which he sprung.

He wished to recall the House to what the real case made out by his hon. friend, was. The House was almost empty when the case was put and hon. Members had come in recently and did not know the facts. The case was that there was a different law with regard to compensation for malicious injuries in England and in Ireland. The Attorney-General said that in all cases of such injury arising from riot or tumultuous assembly compensation could be obtained in England as in Ireland. Of all the cases read out by the Attorney-General he was not able to state one single case of this kind arising out of riotous or tumultuous assembly. It was notorious that there had been no riotous or tumultuous assemblies in Ireland and no injuries had been inflicted in that way. It was not with reference to injuries arising from tumultuous assemblies that the law was different in England to what it was in Ireland. In England if a tramp came from London to the Midlands and in passing through the country set fire to a rick of hay maliciously, or to a house, there was no power to put the compensation for that act upon the people of that locality. It would be a monstrously unjust law which would mulct a number of innocent people living in a peaceful hamlet in England, for the offences committed by a tramp from London. In Ireland the law was different. In Ireland those injuries to properties which had been mentioned, were the acts of individuals, and in some cases those individuals had been caught, put upon their trial, and punished, and it had often been shown during the trial that the offender had no connection with the locality. Nevertheless, in all those cases compensation for the injury done had to be paid, in Ireland, by the ratepayers of the particular district. What answer to that had been made by the Attorney-General? He had not faced that question at all. He had told them about tumultuous assemblies, but the case put by his hon. friend had not been met at all by the right hon. Gentleman except by the reading of a considerable number of offences of this kind and by asking whether they were going to allow the poor man whose property was injured in this way, to be ruined by not getting any compensation. His point was that the law should be the same in England as in Ireland. These offences were not common in Ireland or England, and therefore the law should be the same. He heard with some amusement the answer which was given to his hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone. He called attention to the fact that there had, under this law, sprung up in Dublin a system of breaking windows, on the part of idle tramps or criminals, for the purpose of getting sent to prison, and in all those cases the unfortunate ratepayers of Dublin had to pay the damage. The right hon. Gentleman replied that so long as the law was that the community was liable they could not go into the motives of the men who committed the crime. That was the whole case they put before the House, and he thought a conclusive case had been made out for an alteration in the law. The remedy, however, of the right hon. Gentleman was not an alteration of the law, but an alteration in prison treatment. His remedy was not to make the law the same in England as in Ireland, but to make prison treatment so much more severe in Ireland that the men would not break windows in order to get sent to prison. The right hon. Gentleman had said something about flogging. If that was his remedy he confessed it was quite worthy of him. That was a remedy which was in keeping with every speech he made upon an Irish question. The right hon. Gentleman sneered at them by saying that sometimes they asked for identical treatment with England and sometimes for different treatment. He noticed that whenever they got different treatment it was always different in the direction of coercion or hardship of some kind. They had pointed out in this case a difference in the law between England and Ireland, which hit the ratepayers of every district in the country very hard, and they had been met by this kind of speech from the Treasury Bench. He hoped that in Irish debates, if the Chief Secretary could not attend he would get someone else, either the Civil Lord of the Admiralty or the Secretary of State for War, or anybody else, to represent the view of the Irish Government rather than the Attorney-General, who never interfered in an Irish debate without causing bitterness and bad feeling.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said he wished to repudiate the interpretation which the hon. and learned Member opposite had placed upon the speech of his right hon. friend the Attorney-General. The hon. and learned Member opposite had issued to him a challenge to take part in the debate, and there was a suggestion that he would have been able to deal with this subject with greater confidence than his right hon. friend. [Nationalist cries of "Hear, hear!"] That was an absurd suggestion, because the law of malicious injury filled some five or six Statutes, and upon them his right hon. friend was quite competent to speak. His right hon. friend had given a very interesting analysis of the Acts dealing with this question which stood upon the Statute-book, and he had also gone into the philosophical aspects of the theory of retribution, which stood behind all sanctions imposed by law. No word in that speech could be held to cast any reflection upon Ireland or hon. Members from Ireland. He said himself, as his right hon. friend had said, that crime was at a lower level in Ireland than it had been for many years, so low that he did not propose to continue the quarterly returns of agrarian outrages. That did not alter one jot of the force which underlay every one of the arguments of the Attorney-General. Who were the people whose property was damaged? In the main they were tradesmen in town, but we also knew perfectly well that the property of the agricultural community was damaged. If a man's property was damaged everybody would hold that, if possible, he ought to be compensated, but from what source? There were three sources. In the first place he could be compensated by the person who inflicted the damage, if he could catch him, and if that person had sufficient worldly wealth to pay the compensation. He might, under a system which did not exist in England, Ireland, or anywhere else, be compensated by the community at large, or in the third place he might be compensated by the people who lived around. The law in Ireland was that he should be compensated and, if he could not secure compensation from the persons who inflicted the damage, there was a great deal to be said for the method which existed in Ireland, namely, that compensation for injury to property should be paid by the community in which the person injured lived. That was an incentive to the detection of crime and germane to the whole tenor of Irish life.

There was a great deal of force in the argument used by his right hon. friend that hon. Members from Ireland sometimes pleaded for absolute uniformity and at other times insisted upon discrimination. They had been asked that evening to revert to the judicial process under the grand jury, and it had been stated that Ireland preferred that tribunal to a County Court Judge. In all good local government a sharp division was made between the administrative and judicial functions, and the same division had been made in Ireland, where all questions of a judical or quasi-judicial character were reserved for magistrates. It had been argued that the district or county council affected ought to assess these damages instead of a legal tribunal. He had listened to the speeches and that was what he understood from them. He should not have intervened in the debate at all but for the tenor of the speech of his hon. and learned friend opposite, and he wished to repudiate as strongly as he could the interpretation which had been put upon the very interesting and cogent speech of his right hon. friend. He thought it would be a great mistake to allow proceedings of a judicial character to be undertaken by an elected body. From the point of view of the ratepayers he was prepared to admit that hardship was sometimes inflicted. He did not take a very grave view of some of these reprehensible acts on the part of young men who broke windows, and he admitted a money penalty ought not to be inflicted on the rates if it could be avoided. He agreed that the Government might consider whether by some method that might be avoided. But looking forward to the remainder of this session, he saw no great prospect of ample time for dealing with what, after all, were minor defects in the Statute-book, and he thought that such time as might be at their disposal could be devoted with greater advantage to Ireland to other matters.

Mr. POWER (Waterford, E.) said that perhaps he might be allowed to say that he had never heard a more pointless, illogical, and impudent reply than that which had been delivered by the Attorney-General. Not long ago a series of outrages, including the maiming of cattle, prevailed in the county of Staffordshire and a gentleman belonging to the legal profession was now undergoing imprisonment for those outrages. The question he wished to ask was whether the ratepayers of that particular district in Staffordshire where these outrages were committed, were penalised for the act of this miscreant. He thought this was a parallel case which would show clearly the difference in the law of the two countries.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 90; Noes, 153. (Division List No. 34.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah

M‘Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Slack, John Bamford
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Haliax)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C.W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M‘Calmont, Colonel James
M‘Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Richards, Henry Charles
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B.Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 2nd March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill. To be read a second time to-morrow.

Felixstowe Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Wimbledon; Mitcham; Jump; Kexbro; Higher Broughton; Forton; Shipley (six); Mossley; Northampton; Aberdeen; Leicester; Scalford; Mid Kent; Failsworth; Wiltshire; Leintwardine; Goodleigh; St. Helens; Gosport; Bournemouth; Uttoxeter; Corsham; Chippenham (two); Calne; New Kent Road; Bratton; Bath; Kettering; Leeds (three); North Wilts; Sibford; Berwick-upon-Tweed; Anniesland; Dinmael; Abergele; Colwyn Bay (five); Eyam; Preston Patrick; Liverpool; Rochester; Capel Mawr; Llangynhofal; Waen; Malton; Bampton; Parkgate; Royal Leamington Spa; and Salford; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with Appendix, 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (EARTHENWARE AND CHINA).

Copy presented, of Amended Special Rules for the Manufacture and Decoration of Earthenware and China, as established in certain Factories and Workshops, by the awards of the Arbitrator, Chester Jones, Esq., dated 19th March, 1902, and 18th February, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

VOLUNTEER BATTERIES (QUICK-FIRING GUNS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 25th February; *Colonel Pilkington*]; to lie upon the Table.

INDENTURED COOLIE LABOUR.

Address for "Return of Ordinances now in force in self-governing or Crown Colonies respecting the importation therein of Indentured Coolie Labour from India or elsewhere."—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*)

RAILWAY, ETC., BILLS.

Copy ordered, "of Report by the Board of Trade upon all the Bills and Provisional Orders of Session 1904 relating to Railways, Canals, Tramways, Harbours and Tidal Waters, and the supply of Electricity, Gas, and Water."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Income-Tax Collection in Scotland and England.

Mr. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he has taken any steps to secure that in future years demand notes for the payment of income-tax will not be sent out earlier in Scotland than in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The date of the issue of the demand notes does not appear to me to be material, so long as the date on which payment is required is the same in the two countries.

Post Office Telephone Directory.

Mr. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a charge of 10s. is demanded from subscribers to the Post Office Telephone or from the general public for a copy of the Provincial Directory of the Trunk Lines; and, if so, will he state whether this charge is that sanctioned by the Department in their arrangements with the National Telephone Company, and whether, in the interest of the Revenue and of the subscribers to the Post Office Telephones, an early reduction of such charge can be made; and whether, seeing that the use of the communication under the halfpenny postal rate of an order wanted, is allowed, he will arrange that the word "send" may be placed in the same category.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The charge of 10s. for the complete directory of subscribers to the National Telephone Company is the price fixed by the company for the general supply of such directory; and the Postmaster-General has no power to call upon them to supply copies for the use of Post Office subscribers or the public at a cheaper rate. As regards the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I can assure him that the question of allowing such written instructions as "send" in orders for goods by the halfpenny post has been very carefully considered, but I do not see my way to admitting any manuscript additions in such documents beyond those provided for when the privileges of the halfpenny post were recently extended.

Postal Arrangements at Donard, County Wicklow.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General, whether, in view of the fact that the afternoon despatch of letters from Donard, county Wicklow, takes place at 12.40 p.m., and the inward delivery is at two o'clock p.m., he could make arrangements so that the delivery of letters in Donard from Dunlavin should be made before the letters are sent out from Donard to Dunlavin.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I will have an inquiry made on the question of arranging for an earlier delivery of letters at Donard, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Increased Postal Facilities at Raheen, Mountrath, Queen's County.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is in a position to state what is the result of his promised inquiries with respect to the application of the inhabitants of Raheen, Mountrath, Queen's County, for increased postal facilities.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The inquiries in regard to the application of the inhabitants of Raheen, Mountrath, Queen's County, for increased postal facilities are not yet complete, but I hope soon to be able to communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Postmastership of Moynalty, County Meath.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is a fact that the postmaster of Moynalty, county Meath, has, through ill-health, resigned his position, and that his wife, who is in every respect eligible owing to her long training and tenancy of the house where the post office has been established, is a candidate; and, if so, whether he will, in view of the feeling in the district, give her application his consideration.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The hon. Member has apparently been misinformed. The late sub-postmaster of Moynalty was reported for serious irregularities, and his office was declared vacant last month. The Surveyor has been instructed to report on eligible candidates for the office, and the application of the wife of the late sub-postmaster will be considered with those of other candidates.

Government Grant to School at Broughton Gifford, Wiltshire.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether any grant was made by the Education Department, about the year 1856, towards the building of the school at Broughton Gifford, Wiltshire.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) A building grant of £90 13s. 4d. was paid in 1853.

Crossing from Westminster Abbey to Houses of Parliament.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the hon. Member for the Chorley Division, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether his attention has been called to the condition of the crossing from Westminster Abbey to the public entrance to the House of Commons; and, if so, whether he will take steps to have a crossing laid down which can be kept clean for the use of pedestrians and Members entering the House.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) There is a granite-pitched crossing at the point mentioned. In wet weather, the traffic from the macadam on either side necessitates constant attention to this crossing in order to keep it clean. It is now very frequently swept, but during wet weather steps will be taken to have it swept more frequently than usual.

Royal Naval Reserve.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he will consider the possibility of so enlarging the Royal Naval Reserve as to include those officers who, although not at present occupied on the sea, nevertheless possess valuable experience.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) Under the Royal Naval Reserves Act, 1859, power was obtained to enter 30,000 men "by voluntary entry from among seafaring men and others who may be deemed suitable for the services in which such volunteers may be employed," and it is under this authority that arrangements have been made to enter stokers and engine-room artificers in the Reserve who are not seafaring men. The Naval Forces Act of 1903 abolished the limit of 30,000 imposed by the first-named Act, and the Admiralty have now authority, subject to the voting of the Supply by Parliament, to enter in the Royal Naval Reserves such number of men of the various classes as may be required for His Majesty's Navy.

Appointment of Nurses from Dublin Children's Hospital to Workhouse Infirmaries.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board will sanction the appointment to workhouse infirmaries of nurses who hold certificates from the Children's Hospital in Dublin.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Children's Hospital in Temple Street is regarded by the Board to be competent to certify nurses as qualified within the meaning of Article 2 (b) of the Nursing Order, provided such nurse has received not less than three months training in some recognised general hospital where adult patients are treated. The Board has not yet been asked to recognise the Children's Hospital in Harcourt Street as a training school for nurses.

Irish Agricultural Department.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say what is the meaning of the word personal as applied in the printed Estimates to the salaries of certain officers of the Irish Agricultural Department; whether he can furnish particulars of the names and official titles of all officers of the Department who are in the possession of personal salaries, showing in each case the number of years served towards pension, and indicating, in any case where these officers' salaries are in excess of those included in the original Estimates approved by the Treasury for their respective posts, the amount of such excess, and explaining the circumstances under which the original Estimate has been exceeded.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The term personal salary means that the salary specified is personal to the present holder of the office, and that on the occurrence of a vacancy the amount will be reconsidered. The officers of the Department in receipt of such salaries, with their length of service, are—Mr. Cantrell, Chief Clerk, 36 years; Mr. Porter, Agricultural Inspector, 16 years; Mr. Green, Chief Inspector of Fisheries, 14 years; Mr. Barrett, Professor of Physics, 30 years; Mr. Hartley, Professor of Chemistry, 25 years. The amounts of the several salaries, and the normal scales attached to the post held by each of the officers in question, are given in the printed Estimates for 1903–4. It is not possible to explain within the limits of an answer to a Question the circumstances in which the personal salaries were respectively given.

Railway Service at Ballinrobe.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the last train out of Ballinrobe leaves that town at 2 o'clock p.m. and the last trains into it arrives at 4.30 p.m.; and, if so, whether he will take steps to have the train service so arranged as to enable passengers to catch the night mail to Dublin without the loss of time and money which they have heretofore sustained, and to have a connection with the 4.40 p.m. train from Broadstone as at present exists on the lines leading to Westport and Ballina.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The facts appear to be as stated. No specific representations on the subject have been made to the new Department; if made they will be considered.

Ballinrobe and Claremorris Railway Guarantee.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the ratepayers of the barony of Kilmaine, in the county Mayo, are taxed annually at a rate of from 3d. to 6d. in the £; that when this line of railway was being built the Midland Great Western Railway Company, who are now working the line, gave evidence to show that when it would be in working order it would cost the ratepayers nothing; that the shareholders are guaranteed 5 per cent. on £71,640; and that the railway company are entitled to half gross receipts, and to work the line on the other half; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that the traffic has increased within the past few years, he will take steps to remove the payment of the guarantee from these people.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The railway referred to is presumably the Ballinrobe and Claremorris Railway. It is worked by the Midland Great Western Railway Company for 50 per cent. of the gross receipts. In addition to that working charge there are general charges, directors' and auditors' fees, etc., amounting to about £240 per annum. The surplus revenue to meet the dividend of 5 per cent. on the guaranteed share capital of £71,640 (equal to £3,582 per annum) in the year to 31st October, 1902, was £1,242 13s. 10d., which was a slight improvement on preceding years. This left the sum of £2,339 6s. 2d. to be paid by the guaranteeing area, namely, the barony of Kilmain, and the parish of Ballyovey, in the barony of Carra. One-half of that amount (£1,169 13s. 1d.) was recouped to the guaranteeing area by the Treasury under The Tramways and Public Companies Act, 1883. The net or residual charge would represent 5¼d. in the £ on the valuation of the area charged, namely, £55,435. As the traffic improves (and there has been an improvement since 1893, when the surplus revenue was £730 and the net charge against the guaranteeing area £1,426) relief is afforded to the ratepayers. The guarantee is imposed by statute and cannot be removed without legislation.

Warders in Tullamore Prison.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the intern warders of Tullamore Prison have to sleep in a damp room without fire or heating pipes; that the dampness has been caused by the stoppage of rain-water on the roof; that these warders are locked up in this room at 10 o'clock each night until roll-call the next morning without any means of communication with the governor or chief warder in case of emergency; that the same warders are compelled to sleep in a room in the invalid ward when they are off duty, both before and after night duty, thereby depriving them of the comfort of the beds they had to procure at their own expense when joining the service; that the officer on night duty has to perform nine hours' duty, viz., from 9.45 p.m. till 6.45 a.m. on the following morning, having during that time to mark tell-tale clock every fifteen minutes and fire two furnaces during that period without any relief or the means of preparing food; and, if so, whether he will make inquiries into these matters with a view to having them remedied.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am making inquiry into the several matters alleged in the Question.

Promotion of Irish Assistant Teachers to Principalships.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rules of the National Board of Education ordain that assistant teachers of long and efficient service are entitled to special consideration on their appointment to principalships, and in last May an assistant of nine years' good service was appointed principal of Berrings National School, Roll No. 4,186, Circuit 20, Section 3, and is still receiving the same salary as formerly; and if so, will he state why the rules of the Education Board are not complied with in the case of this teacher.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The rules provide that the cases of assistants highly classed under the rules hitherto in force, but not receiving full class salary, may be specially considered on their promotion to principalships. The principal of Berrings Male National School was appointed on 1st May, 1903; he had been previously an assistant. He was not "highly classed" under the rules hitherto in force, ranking only in second class, and his case was not specially considered on his promotion to the principalship of Berrings National School. The Commissioners, however, made an Order in June, 1903, to the effect that assistants appointed to principalships after the 1st April, 1903, may have their cases considered after one year's service as principal upon a favourable report from inspector, and the teacher in question will be eligible to receive the benefit of this Order.

Army Enlistments—False Teeth and Varicose Veins.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether a person wearing false teeth and suffering from varicose veins is eligible for enlistment in the Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This is purely a medical question and a matter of degree, depending on the number of sound teeth and the extent of the varicose veins.

Army Pensions—Case of Private Michael Sharkey.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Private Michael Sharkey, late of the 41st Regiment, who went through the Crimean War and was disabled by a wound in the left hand, being discharged on a pension of only 10d. a day; whether he is aware that, in consequence of absence in America, this pension was stopped from 1st October, 1863, to October, 1869; and, if so, whether, as he is now one of the few Crimean veterans surviving, this man's pension will be increased and some portion of the deferred pension granted to him by way of annuity.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The hon. Member has apparently not been fully informed of the facts connected with this case. This man went to the United States of America without permission in 1863, and his pension was consequently forfeited under Article 1214 of the Pay Warrant for the period from the 1st October, 1863, to the 30th September, 1868. On appeal he was however, granted arrears from the 4th January, 1867, but further arrears were refused as he had been in prison for "grand larceny" from the 4th October, 1864, to the 3rd January, 1867, and he could not satisfactorily account for his absence for the period preceding his imprisonment. In July, 1902, in consideration of his having been wounded in the Crimea, he was awarded a special pension of 1s. 6d. a day. This pension, which he is now drawing, cannot be further increased.

Cost of Foreign Armies.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the cost of the armies of France, Germany, Russia, and the United

States, and the numbers on the active lists, respectively, for the last ascertainable year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*). The figures are as follows :—

	Army Estimates.	Peace Establishments. Active Army (all ranks).
	£	
France, 1904 - -	27,053,196	602,120
Germany, 1903-4	31,880,455	600,000
Russia, 1903 - -	36,647,089	1,124,037
United States, 1903-4 - - -	24,383,469	67,438

In the case of France a number of items, such as coast fortifications, which are of a military nature, are provided for in the Naval Budget, and so also in the case of Germany, though to a less extent. The German Estimates make no provision for pensions, which are included in a separate budget and amount to about £5,000,000 a year.

Indentured and Free Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) : To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if, while the system of indentured Chinese labour is in force in the Transvaal Colony, measures will be taken to prevent the introduction of free Chinese labour.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Measures are already in force under the Peace Preservation Ordinance by which the introduction of free Chinese labour can be restricted by withholding permits.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Treasury Expenditure.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) : I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will give a Return setting forth the total expenditure of the Treasury in each year for the past twenty years, showing under sub-heads the totals each year under the different Departments of the public service.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) : Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to answer this Question. The total amount of the Exchequer issues, showing the services to which they are allocated, are given in the Finance Accounts published every year about the end of June. These volumes are available for reference, and will, I think, give the hon. Member all the information he requires.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: My object in putting the Question was to get the information in a handy form for reference.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I think the hon. Member, if he refers to the Army and Navy Estimates, will get the information he requires from some Returns which have already been issued this year.

Sugar Imports from Cuba.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will say what was the quantity and the value of sugar received in this country from Cuba during 1903.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) : 448,682 cwts., valued at £215,647.

Sugar Consumption on the Continent.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any fall in retail prices or increase in consumption of sugar has taken place in France, Germany, Holland, or Belgium, as a result of the Brussels Convention between 1st September, 1903, and 1st March, 1904, as compared with the corresponding period in 1902–3.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Comparisons of consumption of sugar during periods so short as those specified in the Question are apt to be misleading, but such figures as I have seen point to an increase of consumption in Germany, France, and Belgium. In Germany and France the retail price of sugar at the beginning of the present year was lower than at the beginning of 1903. If further information is required I must ask for longer notice.

Confectionery Imports.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the quantity and value of confectionery and other sugared goods imported into this country during 1903.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: 1,444,787 cwts., valued at £2,691,875. Of this, sweetened condensed milk accounted for 874,608 cwts. and £1,665,809.

London County Council Trams—Liability for Accidents.

MR. HORNER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the case of Parker *versus* the London County Council, in which the plaintiff claimed damages for injuries caused by the council's tramcars, and to the fact that responsibility was repudiated by the London County Council under The Public Authorities Protection Act, 1893; and, if so, whether he will initiate legislation to prevent the pleading of this Act in cases of injuries caused to the public by tramcars and other conveyances owned by the London County Council and similar bodies.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I think that there has been some misapprehension as to the effect of the decision in the case referred to. As I understand the matter, the Court decided, not that the London County Council were not responsible for injuries caused to the public by their tramcars, but that any proceedings in respect of the act, neglect, or default causing the injury must be commenced within six months. This is in accordance with the general rule, which, under Section 1 of the Public Authorities Protection Act, 1893, is applicable to persons acting in the execution of any Statute, duty, or authority, and I am not aware of any sufficient reason for making an exception to it.

MR. HORNER: Arising out of the Answer I hope I may be permitted to ask the hon. Gentleman whether it is within his knowledge that the London County Council kept up the correspondence in this matter until it was too late for the injured man to bring an action.

MR. GRANT LAWSON: I am not aware of that, but I think it very unlikely that the local authority would proceed in that manner.

MR. HORNER: It actually occurred in this case.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The question of the conduct of the London County Council as defendant in an action cannot be raised.

MR. HORNER: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the concluding part of my Question as to whether he intends to initiate legislation in order to prevent this kind of abuse.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, that Question was answered.

British Agriculture—Co-operative Credit Societies.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the desirability of providing the small farmers and agricultural labourers of Great Britain with the means of obtaining cheap credit for productive purposes, and seeing that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, following the example of Continental countries, advances small sums of money to co-operative credit societies working on the Raiffeisen system, he will consider the advisability of recommending the Government to adopt a similar policy for England, Scotland, and Wales in those cases where the requisite funds for co-operative credit societies cannot be obtained from private sources.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): As my hon. friend is aware, the Department of Agriculture in Ireland is in a position to dispose of a large sum of money in such manner as may seem to it most likely to benefit the agricultural and educational interests under its charge; while the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries in England has no such fund. The number of co-operative credit societies in England is not as large as in Ireland but, if the co-operative movement in England should hereafter attain similar proportions, my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries would give careful consideration to any proposals for assistance which would not involve a serious charge or risk to the Exchequer.

Kerry Roads.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that roads, now alleged to have been illegally constructed by the late grand juries, are at present maintained at the public expense; and whether, seeing that no representations were made to the grand juries to reconstruct these roads to meet the requirements of the Statute of William IV., he will state why this demand has been made on the Kerry County Council with reference to the road at Lickeen, county Kerry.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I am informed that some roads were constructed by the grand jury of a less width than 16 feet, notwithstanding the provision of the Grand Jury Act, 1836, and that such roads have been maintained at the public expense. It is doubtful whether it would now be competent for an auditor to disallow expenditure upon such roads. Prior to the passing of the Local Government Act of 1898 auditors were not empowered to question the legality of presentments made by the grand jury and duly fiated by the Judge of Assize. The road at Lickeen was not constructed or repaired by the grand jury, and in these circumstances it is now obligatory upon the auditor to see that the provisions of the law are observed.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) asked if any general directions would be given to the auditors to prevent these surcharges being made.

MR. WYNDHAM: No; the auditors are appointed to examine accounts, and to give general directions to persons discharging that duty would be a mistake. They are bound to do their duty according to law, but there is a discretion vested in the Local Government Board to remit any surcharge on equitable grounds.

Head Constable Moore, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the nature of the temporary duty which Head Constable Moore is discharging in Greencastle, county Antrim; and whether he can state why Head Constable Moore is not receiving the extra allowance due for temporary duty.

MR. WYNDHAM: Head Constable Moore was sent to Greencastle in August last as a temporary measure owing to the condition of party feeling in the district. He performs the duties ordinarily performed by head constables. He has not received extra remuneration, but if he is entitled to it, it will be paid. The hon. Member is aware that my attention was directed by Questions put last August† to certain occurrences at Greencastle. The transfer of the Head Constable to the district at that time was an act done in the interests of all parties in the district. If the district continues peaceable, as it is at present, he will in due course be withdrawn.

Antrim County Council.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many salaried officials are employed by the Antrim County Council, and what the total salary list of that body amounts to; and whether he can state the religious denominations of the officials, and what proportion of the total salary list is paid to Roman Catholic officials.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): May I also ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of salaried officials in the employment of the Down County Council, and the religious denominations to which they belong; the total amount of salaries paid; and the proportion paid to Roman Catholic officials.

MR. WYNDHAM: Information in respect to the emoluments of the secretary of each county council in Ireland

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxvi., 1448.

and of the officials employed in his office will be found in a Return laid on the Table last session [No. 152]. I see grave objections to the Government instituting an investigation into the religious denominations of persons appointed by elected bodies. We have no power to compel such bodies to give the information. If, however, it were given in the case of counties Antrim and Down such a course might lead to a request for similar investigation in respect of other counties, and so foment a spirit of sectarian bitterness which all must desire to see allayed.

Galbraith Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the property of the late John Samuel Galbraith are being sued for rent and arrears; and whether, as he has promised to direct the Estates Commissioners' attention to this estate with a view to its purchase as a congested estate, he will urge the Commissioners to at once take steps to approach the landlord in this matter with a view to sale.

MR. WYNDHAM: I undertook to bring the suggestion in the hon. Member's previous Question of the 15th ultimo† under the notice of the Commissioners. That was done, and I am informed that they have received no application for the purchase of the estate from the owner. If such an application be made it will have consideration.

Captain Musters' Estate, County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in what state the sale of the estate of Captain J. G. Musters, consisting of a number of townlands in the parish of Clonguish, county Longford, now stands; whether any objections to the sale have been made; if so, by whom; and when it is proposed to vest the property in the tenants.

MR. WYNDHAM: One hundred and two applications for advances on this estate were received. In all these, with the exception of six, the sales have been completed. In four of the six excepted cases questions arose as to boundaries and turbary, which have been recently disposed of. The advances have been sanctioned and the holdings can be at once vested. The remaining two are awaiting inspection.

States Butter.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the sale of States Butter, called American Ladles, with the view of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland taking action to prevent it being made up and sold as Irish Firkin Butter; also, whether he will inquire if this stuff is made of glucose and dextrine, and, if so, will the importation of it be stopped.

MR. WYNDHAM: The attention of the Department was directed to this substance in August last. It was ascertained that a quantity had been consigned to a Limerick trader not as butter, but as "American Butter Grease." No evidence was obtainable that the substance was placed on the market as Irish butter. The Department is giving special attention to the matter, and if evidence of illegal sales is forthcoming vigorous action will be taken.

MR. JOYCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman give instructions to have some of this stuff analysed?

MR. WYNDHAM: That has been done already.

Alleged Perjury at Ballinrobe Petty Sessions.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Allen Bell, Resident Magistrate, stationed at Ballinrobe, county Mayo, reported to the Irish Executive the grave conduct of two policemen who gave false evidence at the Ballinrobe Petty Sessions; and, if so, on what date was the communication received from him.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have already stated that the papers in this case have been laid before the Attorney-General, and when further information, which has been called for, is forthcoming a decision will be taken by Government. I think the hon. Member will see, therefore, that it is most undesirable, at the present stage, to answer Questions which cover only a small part of the ground and deal with a matter on which a decision is pending.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1334.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: When may we expect a reply?

MR. WYNDHAM: At an early date. Naturally the Government are unwilling that this charge should be kept hanging over the heads of these men.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last part of the Question?

MR. WYNDHAM: I must decline to add anything to my Answer.

MR. MACVEAGH rose to put another Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman has answered the Question on the Paper and distinctly declines to say anything further.

MR. MACVEAGH: He has not answered the latter part of the Question.

Macroom Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the Local Government Board inquiry into a labourers' cottage scheme for additional half-acres recently held in the Macroom Rural District, one of the councillors for the Candroma electoral division, Mr. Michael Lucey, appeared before the inspector on Monday, 22nd, and requested that his evidence in favour of the scheme should be heard. stating that he had received no official notification of the inquiry, and could not, owing to illness, attend on the first day of the proceedings; and, if so, will he explain on what grounds the inspector refused the evidence of Mr. Lucey at this inquiry.

MR. WYNDHAM: It has been found necessary to communicate this Question to the inspector for report. Perhaps the hon. Member will be good enough to repeat it on Monday next.

Irish Railway Employees—Pensions.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that there is not any special provision whereby employees on guaranteed light railways in Ireland may become entitled to pensions after long and efficient service, he can hold out any immediate hope that these public servants will have their interests in this matter considered in a Government Bill.

MR. WYNDHAM: Employees on such railways are in the same position as officials on other railways and commercial undertakings. There are no special reasons for differentiating in favour of the former, and I cannot therefore hold out any hope in the direction suggested by the hon. Member.

In reply to a further Question, Mr. WYNDHAM said the matter was entirely one for the railway companies and he had no right to interfere.

Belfast Constabulary.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many sergeants in the Royal Irish Constabulary in Belfast have been retired on pension through the age limit during the past three years, and to what religious denominations they belonged; how many have been retained in the Force, although over the age limit, and the religious denominations to which they belong; and whether the system prevailing in Belfast is universal in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no age limit in Belfast or elsewhere in Ireland. The conditions of service in the Force are regulated by the Statute 46 and 47 Vict., cap. 14. A Return is in preparation showing the number and religions of sergeants who have been required to retire during the past three years upon the completion of twenty-five years' service, and will be communicated to the hon. Member in the course of the afternoon.

Mrs. Bruce Pryce's Estate, County Kildare.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants of Mrs. Bruce Pryce on her estate at Rheban, county Kildare, have served originating notices to fix fair rents for the first term for hearing before the County Court Judge at the ensuing April sessions at Kildare; that the landlord has served notice to transfer to the Land Commission and the order to transfer will be made as of course; that Maurice Walsh, a tenant on this estate, served an originating notice so far back as the 8th of February, 1903; that on Vesey's estate notices were served on the 27th January, 1903, and no lists for hearing these cases have been published up to the present; and, if so, whether, in view of the effect on the tenants of the delay in having a fair rent fixed, he can state when a sub-commission will sit for the hearing of cases in county Kildare in the Athy Union.

MR. WYNDHAM: The fair rent applications from the Bruce Pryce Estate have not yet been transferred from the Civil Bill Court to the Land Commission. Applications lodged with the Commission from this district prior to the close of last year, will be listed for hearing in the course of the present month or early in April.

South African War—Death Roll.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the total number of officers and men killed, the number who died of wounds, and the number who died from enteric fever and other diseases during the war in South Africa.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The figures are as follows—

	Officers.	Warrant, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.
Killed or died of wounds	719	6,863.
Deaths from Enteric fever	183	7,807.
Deaths from other diseases	223	4,926.

The statistics do not show the killed separately from those who died of wounds, and the compilation of the figures would involve considerable labour.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) inquired how many of those who died of enteric had undergone the process of inoculation.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER replied that he had not that information.

Somaliland Expenditure.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War under what authority he proposes to pay the expenses of the war in Somaliland after the 31st of March, for which no provision is made in the Army Estimates.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I would remind the hon. Member of the remarks on the subject in my Memorandum on Army Estimates, 1904–5. Pending an additional Estimate (should such be necessary) the expenditure in question will be met temporarily out of Army Votes generally for 1904–5.

South African Natives and Chinese Mine Labour.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before sanctioning the Ordinance for the importation of Chinese indentured labour into the Transvaal, he will cause further inquiry to be made as to the effect of such importation on the minds of the native tribes of South Africa, and the complications which may ensue, and communicate the results of such inquiry to this House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I do not see my way to giving the pledge required by the hon. and gallant Member.

MAJOR SEELY: That does not appear to be an Answer to my Question.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Sale of Intoxicants and Opium to Chinese.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal law prohibiting the sale of intoxicants to natives will apply to imported Chinese labourers; and whether the regulations to be framed under the Transvaal Imported Labour Ordinance will prohibit the supply of opium to those labourers.

MR. LYTTELTON: The Law to which the hon. Member refers prohibits the supply of intoxicants to coloured persons, except as regards Kaffir beer for the use of natives employed at the mines, and I am communicating with Lord Milner as to the corresponding arrangements to be made in the case of Chinese. As regards the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I am advised that Chinese labourers are not addicted to the excessive use of opium, but the necessity for providing against such abuse will not be lost sight of.

Labour Ordinances—Hours of Labour and Pay.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any labour Ordinance of any importance now in force in any Crown colony in which the maximum number of hours of labour per day for the indentured labourer and the minimum rate of wages to be paid him are not provided for in the Ordinance itself.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have not been able to assure myself within the short notice given of the facts. It is perhaps sufficient to state that the contract into which the labourer will enter will contain the hours of labour and the rate of wages agreed upon. The contract is fully safeguarded in the interests of the Chinese, not merely by his own intelligence but by a Protector to be appointed in China by the Chinese Government.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what wages have been agreed upon?

MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

British Indians and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his statement in his telegram to Lord Milner of 16th January, that the provisions of the draft Ordinance for the importation of indentured labour, if applied to British Indians, would probably be objected to by the Indian Government, is based upon any correspondence; and, if so, whether he will lay this correspondence upon the Table of the House.

MR. LYTTELTON: The statement in the telegram in question was based, not upon any correspondence, but upon the fact that communications have been proceeding between the Transvaal Government, the Colonial Office, the Indian Office, and the Indian Government with a view of arriving at an agreement with regard to the *status* of the Indian traders, licensed and unlicensed, carrying on business in the Transvaal now and before the war; and that pending the settlement of this matter the Indian Government is disposed to object to the introduction of Indian coolies into the Transvaal. As those negotiations are still proceeding I do not propose to lay Papers at present.

Sunday Trains on Irish Railways.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Great Southern and Western Railway Company have for some time discontinued the Sunday trains between Limerick and Tralee, which were continually run by the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company; whether he has received a resolution of the traders and others in Abbeyfeale, in the county of Limerick, complaining of such action: and whether, seeing that by the amalgamation of the latter company with the former the public were guaranteed equal facilities to those heretofore enjoyed by them, he will, in view of the loss and inconvenience o the public caused by the discontinuance of these trains, take steps to have them continued.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have received from the hon. Member a copy of the resolution to which he refers. I am inviting the observations of the railway company in the matter and will communicate with the hon. Member on receiving the company's reply.

Cork Post Office—Overtime for American Mails.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the whole dual staff of the Cork Post Office, with four or five exceptions, has suffered to an extent varying from 1d. to 4d. per hour by the abolition of the special rate for overtime for the disposal of the American mail matter, he will increase the minimum rate to 1s. per hour, in view of the importance attached to the acceleration of those mails; and whether steps will be taken, without delay, to compensate those officers who have suffered by the late reduction.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I have called for a further report on the matter to which the hon. Member refers, and I will give him a reply as soon as possible.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): Can the noble Lord say why this special rat of pay for overtime has been abolished?

LORD STANLEY: It arises out of a general readjustment based on the recommendations, I believe, of the Tweedmouth Committee. I am making further inquiries into the matter.

Marine Insurance Bill.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state whether the Marine Insurance Bill will be re-introduced at an early date.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I hope the Bill to which my hon. friend refers, and in which I know he takes the greatest interest, will be introduced at an early date.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR: Will it be first brought in in this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, I believe that is the arrangement.

Alien Immigration Bill.

MR. TREVELYAN Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is probable that the Alien Immigration Bill will be introduced before Easter.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope this Bill will be introduced before Easter, but the House knows that our pressing necessity at the present moment is Supply, and I can give no absolute pledge on the subject.

Parliament and the Press.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of arranging to supply Blue-books and other State Papers, issued by Command or by public departments, simultaneously to Parliament and to the Press.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, may I point out, with regard to the mysterious document to which I have already made reference on two successive days, that we are still without that document, although it appeared in the newspapers on Monday morning?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the fact to which the right hon. Gentleman calls my attention, and of which I was not aware, is most regrettable. I do not know what is the cause of it. The House knows that when the Press gets hold of a document it has very exceptional facilities for rapidly putting it before the public, and no machinery we can construct, will, I think, be able to compete with them. But I think every effort ought to be made in order that documents may be in the hands of Members or, at the very least, in the Vote Office before they are available for the Press for publication.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman hardly goes back far enough. He says the Press "got hold" of this document.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, no!

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Someone must have given the document to the Press. The point at which to stop these proceedings is surely the point where the communication is made by the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not talking about that particular document.

I did, it is true, refer to that, but in my general observations I was referring to a rule which I think, as far as possible, ought to be applied to all documents. As regards that particular document, I think it is a very serious thing that it should not have been in the hands of Members. I was not in London last week. I was communicated with as to whether there was any objection to publication. I said "No."

Mr. BUCHANAN: Would the difficulty not be got over by arranging that the Press shall only obtain the documents when printed for the use of Members?

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Inasmuch as the copy furnished to the Press is always printed, would it take more than a few more hours to strike off the 700 copies required for Members?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the matter is quite so simple as my hon. friend supposes, but I am quite willing to do my best.

Mr. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Was this mysterious document submitted to the members of the Cabinet before being given to the Press?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: That does not arise out of the Question.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is quite customary for the Press to get advance copies of public documents long before they are in the hands of Members?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order. This is now becoming a debate.

Irish Bills.

Mr JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will immediately introduce the promised measure dealing with labourers in Ireland, so as to afford ample time for the consideration of its provisions by those specially interested in the matter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Both the Bills to which the hon. Gentleman refers will, I hope, be introduced at a very early date.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: May we hope they may be introduced nex week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope so.

The Parliamentary Session.

Mr. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the proposed alteration in the Parliamentary Session; and if he will give facilities for a discussion upon the subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think anything but good would ensue upon a discussion of this question by the House, and I hope my hon. friend will be successful in the ballot. There are two points to be considered in connection with this matter—one is the great difficulty of rearranging the session in view of the legal end of the financial year and the necessity of getting through the greater part of Supply after the financial year. The second difficulty which has always influenced me in throwing cold water on the proposal is that, while I am quite sure it would be easy to make the session begin earlier, I am not quite sure it would be easy to make it end earlier.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the county of Dorset (Eastern Division), in the room of the Hon. Humphry Napier Sturt, now Baron Alington, called up to the House of Peers.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir James Fergusson reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure; and Sir Thomas Esmonde to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including

Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON further reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had agreed to the following Resolution:—"That any member of the Chairmen's Panel be and he is hereby empowered to ask any other member of the Chairmen's Panel to take his place in case of necessity."

Reports to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

NEW BILL.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend The Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Gretton; supported by Mr. Butcher, Mr. Cameron, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Carne Rasch, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Soames; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 106.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee:

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,691,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to Officers, Seamen and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) inquired if a general discussion would be allowed on the Vote.

***THE CHAIRMAN**: I think the practice has been to allow a general discussion on Vote A and Vote 1, and it is by arrangement only that such discussions are allowed on other Votes. I, therefore, think that in this case a general discussion will be permissible.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that in continuation of the protest he made on Vote A he intended to move a reduction of the present Vote, which was the first in which they were confronted with a large increase of money for naval expenditure. He thought he was justified from the point of view of the Irish taxpayers in making a practical protest by moving a reduction.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): On a point of order I wish to move an Amendment, and I should like to know if a reduction moved by the hon. Gentleman for East Clare will have the effect of excluding me from an opportunity of drawing attention to an earlier item in the Vote?

***THE CHAIRMAN**: If a reduction is moved of the whole sum it will not be possible then to move a reduction of an item.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): Would it be possible for the Government to put the closure on the Motion, and thus deprive hon. Members of an opportunity of discussing details of the Vote?

***THE CHAIRMAN**: Certainly.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he had no desire to prevent hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway indulging in any criticisms they might deem necessary in regard to the policy of the Government, and, therefore, he would content himself with moving a reduction of Item A by the sum of £281,692. He thought it was most unjust and unfair from the point of view of the Irish taxpayer that, without any reference whatever to the capacity of Ireland to meet these great increases of expenditure, these additions to the Estimates should be put down. He did not complain in the slightest degree of the Secretary to the Treasury or of the officials in charge of the Admiralty making what arrangements they considered to be necessary for the efficiency of the Fleet as far as England was concerned, and he held that an Irish Member had very little right in that House to object to any expenditure—naval or otherwise—of the money of the British taxpayer. The Government was entitled to do exactly as it liked with its own taxation. They could increase the Navy Estimates and the Army Estimates year by year if they chose, but the Irish taxpayers objected—and it was an objection against which no reasonable argument could be advanced—that it was unfair to insist on their paying whether their country was prosperous or not. They ought not to be called upon, whether they liked or not, to pay their share of any increased expenditure which might be deemed necessary by the British Government. That raised at once the whole question of Ireland's position towards Great Britain under the Act of Union, which abolished the Irish Parliament. They were told at the time of the Union that the amalgamation of the Irish and British Legislatures would have most beneficial results so far as Ireland was concerned; they were told that under the Union they would enjoy benefits and advantages which they could never obtain under an Irish Parliament. But those who opposed the Union very wisely predicted that that result very likely would not be achieved, but that, on the contrary, the result of the union of the Irish and British Parliaments would be that Ireland, from a financial point of view, would suffer considerably. He ventured to assert most respectfully that no Member on either side of the House could deny that the effect of the Union down to the present day had been that the Irish taxpayer had been called upon to spend enormous sums for purposes which would never have arisen at all had Ireland remained a self-governing country with a Parliament of her own—had been called upon to spend enormous sums of money for purposes which had been brought about owing to the action of England and Scotland, and through no fault of the Irish people themselves. He knew he was bound to confine himself to the Navy Estimates on that particular occasion; otherwise, he thought he would have been able to trace, year by year, during the last century, action on the part of successive Governments which had entailed the expenditure of enormous sums by Ireland owing to the arrangements under the Union from which Ireland had derived no benefit whatever. He would not refer, even briefly, to the South African War which had just been concluded. It was, however, a notorious fact that Ireland had no interest in that war, that the Irish people were passionately opposed to it, and whether they were right or wrong in the estimation of Englishmen, the fact remained that the voices and the votes of Ireland in that House were raised in opposition to it, and that they disclaimed all participation in it. Yet the Irish people had been called upon to pay a very large and unfair proportion of the 250,000,000 or so of money which the war had cost the taxpayers of these countries.

These Naval Estimates were simply a continuation of the old policy towards Ireland of making Irish people share an increased expenditure whether they desired to do so or not, and his object in rising that day was to ask—though he supposed it would be perfectly futile for him to do so—that in the future some arrangement might be made, while the present system of Irish Government lasted, whereby increased expenditure which was initiated by England alone should be borne by England alone, and that the Irish taxpayers should be relieved from this enormous tax upon their slender resources. He knew perfectly well that a great many Members would come at once to the conclusion that in objecting to the increase of those Estimates he, and those of his colleagues who joined him in the objection, were simply actuated by the motive of delaying the transaction of business. There were, he believed, some Members who went so far as to say that their object was simply to waste the time of Parliament. Well, they had to put up with those misrepresentations, and he said there, as sincerely and truly as ever any man had made a declaration in that House, that he was objecting to that increase because he believed it was monstrously unjust and unfair to ask Irish taxpayers for an increase of even one shilling of money under the Vote. He would ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he could tell him how much of that money would—directly or indirectly—benefit the Irish people. The number of Irishmen in the Fleet was extremely small, and, as regarded the cost of the Coast Guard Service, that service was, in Ireland, also a comparatively small one. It would, therefore, be impossible to suggest that Ireland participated to any extent in the benefit of the expenditure of this money. An increase was apparent in all the Votes contained in the Estimates, and in connection with everyone of them he ventured to assert that the Irish people got no return whatever for the expenditure. It was perfectly futile for the Secretary to the Treasury or any other hon. Member representing the Government to tell him that they had in return for that great expenditure the satisfaction of knowing that they were protected and safeguarded all round their coasts by the British Fleet.

He did not know whether this country was in danger or not; he did not know whether the standard set up—the two-Power standard which had been set up for our Fleet to render it able to cope with the fleets of any other two nations in the world—was justified by circumstances or not. This country might be in danger, and it might be considered necessary to spend even more money than it was now proposed to spend for its protection; but, however that might be, no one could seriously urge that it was necessary for the welfare and security of Ireland, with its population of 4,500,000, to spend year after year increasingly large sums of money for the upkeep of the greatest and largest Fleet in the world. They in Ireland were in no danger; their foreign trade had unfortunately almost vanished. A hundred years ago there was a considerable trade throughout Ireland, but one of the results of the destruction of the separate Irish Government had undoubtedly been the disappearance of the foreign trade of Ireland, and it was, therefore, absurd to say that any theory of national security or well-being could justify a demand on the Irish people to spend millions of their money for a Fleet from which they derived absolutely no advantage whatever. He said seriously it would only be fair and reasonable to arrive at some arrangement in regard to Ireland whereby, if it were necessary that they should pay some share of the cost, the amount should be fixed and not exceeded year after year. That was done in the case of the Colonies, and he would ask the Secretary to the Treasury, without going into details, to say whether, supposing our naval expenditure continued growing year by year, the demand upon the Colonies would increase in proportion. They knew very well that it would not; that a sum had been fixed to cover a certain period of years, and that whether the expenditure on the British Navy was larger or smaller that given sum only would have to be paid. The case of Ireland, however, was quite different from that of the Colonies. The Irish people were poorer, their resources were much slighter in every way than the resources of the Colonies. They certainly were not so wealthy, and it was, therefore, most unnecessary to call upon them to pay this enormously huge sum of money, increasing as it was, year by year. The whole position of Ireland in reference to Great Britain in this matter was most unjust and unfair, and he would go even further and would say that, in his opinion, it was a downright mean thing for a great and wealthy Government like the present one to insist upon the Irish people, whose poverty was perfectly well known, sharing to the fullest extent the burden of this expenditure. He might cite another point. Some years ago a Royal Commission sat to consider the relative positions of Ireland and Great Britain in the matter of taxation, and it was on record that that Commission reported that the Irish people were contributing several millions a year more than they ought in fairness to pay for national purposes. That could not be gainsaid in any way, and yet the demands upon the Irish taxpayer were being increased year after year. The Irish people found the greatest possible difficulty in providing for themselves the ordinary necessaries of life, and yet, without the slightest reference to their deplorable condition, the representatives of the wealthy English nation came there and without any hesitation insisted that they should consent to the increased naval expenditure. The Irish people had no sympathy whatever with this braggart policy which had been adopted by the present Government, the result of which they saw in the expenditure of those enormous sums of money. If the Government considered these things were necessary, if they considered that the wealth of the country should be sunk in shipbuilding and gunmaking, it was their business, and no one had any right to interfere with their opinion or their decision to spend their own money as lavishly and as generously as they chose upon their Fleet. They might make that Fleet four times its present size, they might fill their dockyards with work and employ thousands more men than they did at the present day; but they had no right to ask the people of Ireland, who were not threatened by any danger from any Power in the wide world, to keep pace with them in that expenditure, which was creating alarm by reason of its very magnitude.

He had asked a Question of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that day with a view to securing a Return which would give in a handy and intelligible form information showing to the taxpayer of this country, and of Ireland as well, what had been the growth of naval expenditure during the last twenty years. This year there was a further increase, next year there would be another, and doubtless in the year following the same thing would happen, and so the thing would go on until there was as much spent on the Army and Navy as was at present spent on all the Departments put together. That was the road to ruin. One day there would be a rude awakening, and the masses of the people would see that national safety did not exist in this rivalry between nations as to expenditure. Personally he did not care if it did lead England to disaster, as in many ways she deserved it. She could make her Navy as large as she liked, but she ought to do it with her own money, and not force Ireland to pay whether she liked it or not. As an illustration of the manner in which Ireland was treated he instanced the Coastguards. He had no objection to Coastguards as such; they were picturesque - looking individuals, and with their flags and guns they served to break the monotony of the coast. But so far as Ireland was concerned far too much money was spent on the service. What was the use of the expenditure? When had the Irish coast been attacked? When had these men made any practical return for the money expended on them? The days of smuggling had long gone by, and the Coastguards apparently had nothing to do except to fire big guns at nothing at all in the sea. Along the Irish coasts there existed some of the poorest and most miserable populations in the whole world; the people were huddled together without sufficient land to live upon and with their fisheries undeveloped. Side by side with these poverty stricken people would be found a Coastguard station, the cost of whose upkeep, if spent in improving harbours or buying boats, might greatly relieve the lot of these poor people. The contrast was really too great. He could not expect English Members, who probably represented constituencies in which there was no real poverty, to enter into his view on this matter, but if they came from districts in Ireland they would readily agree that there was much to complain of in the enormous expenditure from which the Irish people derived no benefit whatever. He was perfectly aware that no attention whatever would be paid to anything Irish representatives might say. It was true that they did not share the Englishman's enthusiasm for the Navy and the Empire. As a matter of fact, many of their constituents had never even seen a man-of-war, and they could not be said to be unreasonable in objecting to enormous increases in the Votes from which they would derive no practical benefit whatever. A system by which Ireland made a reasonable fixed payment might work, but the present system under which she had to pay more and more every year simply perpetuated illfeeling, dissatisfaction, and disloyalty. It was well known that Ireland had no sympathy with the policy which necessitated the expenditure of £42,000,000 on the Navy and £25,000,000 or £30,000,000 on the Army; she was outside it in every way except that she was compelled to bear her full share of the cost; but as long as that position continued there would remain to her representatives the consolation, poor though it might be, of protesting vigorously and repeatedly against an impost which was unfair and mean to the last degree. He begged to move.

Mr. William Redmond.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Wages, &c., of Officers, Seamen, and Boys) be reduced by £281,692."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University), who was very indistinctly heard, referred to the method by which the Admiralty now selected the young officers for the Navy. He heartily supported the principle of the scheme. Without committing himself to every detail, he believed the plan adopted was an admirable one, and he hoped it would be successful. There were two methods of selecting officers—that adopted by the Admiralty of taking the boys at a very early age, and becoming responsible for their entire education, and the system adopted by all other civilised nations of taking the young officer at seventeen or eighteen years of age from the ordinary civil population and then beginning special training. The system of the Admiralty was not necessarily to be condemned because it was unique. He believed the British naval officer, all round, to be the best in the world, but whether that was in consequence or in spite of the method of training was a point upon which differences of opinion might exist. One of the chief disadvantages of the present system was that the young boys were deprived of the immense advantage of being brought up, and educated amongst the ordinary youth of the country. They had not got the ideas which they would get in association with other boys, and that was no doubt a very great disadvantage. Another disadvantage was that when a boy was twelve years of age, it was difficult to say whether he would make a good naval officer or not. Again they could not tell when he arrived at the age of seventeen or eighteen years whether he might not have developed an earnest desire for some other profession. It was a great misfortune for a grown-up young man to be obliged to follow a profession to which he had not a natural bent. Having made their choice he thought the Admiralty were carrying it out in the best way they could, and he cordially wished their plan success. He hoped they would never send these young boys to anything approaching a competitive examination, for it did them a most pernicious injury to cram them. If the system adopted was to be given a fair chance they must make up their minds not to have a competitive examination. He also wished to point out that to test the success of the scheme would require a considerable number of years. His hon. friend behind him seemed to think that the scheme had succeeded already. He agreed that it would not be difficult to get a great number of boys to join the Navy, but it would be at least twenty or thirty years before they could tell whether the naval officer produced by this sort of training would be an improvement. One objection he had always made was that the plan of taking boys at twelve years of age had been tried and been found wanting. The plan of taking them at seventeen or eighteen years of age had not been tried, but he did not think the age of fifteen or sixteen years as an alternative was a satisfactory compromise.

With regard to school management, when the Admiralty undertook to manage a school they should be very careful to see that it was really a good one. If public schools were never going to be better than they were now, then the Admiralty would be right in saying that they must have a school of their own. He was not sure that the Admiralty would be able to maintain the school as well as the public schools were now maintained. He would suggest that the Admiralty should have this school examined by the Department of the Board of Education, and that the reports of that inspection and examination should from time to time be laid on the Table of the House. He thought that would be a safeguard for the Admiralty itself, and a guarantee that the large amount of money asked for would be usefully and properly expended. Instead of taking a much larger number of boys at the age of eighteen it might be better to have some system by which the wastage could be supplied from the outside. That had been done in former days in the Admiralty, and in that way they had a great check upon the efficiency of the system. Those were points which he desired to urge upon the Government last year, but he did not get the opportunity. He wished the Admiralty to consider this as a matter of education, and not as a matter of naval policy, and if they did he thought it possible that some system of the kind might improve and assist the plan which the Admiralty had adopted and in the carrying out of which he had no desire to do anything but give them the most cordial support.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said there could be no doubt that expenditure upon the present scale of the Navy Estimates pressed very hardly upon this country as well as upon Ireland. Knowing as he did the importance of having a sufficiently strong Navy, he had never found any difficulty in supporting the Navy Estimates, and, despite their growth, which had been almost alarmingly rapid, he should not oppose any part of the expenditure upon the Navy which was now being asked for. Years ago he said in this House that he thought the expenditure upon the Navy would ultimately rise to £40,000,000, but he did not think it would have arrived so soon. With regard to the information upon which they granted the money that was asked for, he thought that information was in some respects somewhat slender. It was, indeed, almost impossible that it should be otherwise, because they all knew that there were items in naval expenditure as in other Departments which could not well be discussed in public. They took a very serious responsibility upon themselves in voting an expenditure which increased at so rapid a rate unless they were certain that means could not be devised by which the House could be more fully taken into the confidence of the Admiralty. They could not consider the Navy Estimates without bearing in mind what was being spent annually upon naval works. The naval works at Rosyth would cost over £5,000,000. He gave that as an example of the expenditure they were asked to sanction without having any real knowledge of what it was for. If one had to defend that expenditure in the country it could be justified fully only upon the ground that it was necessary to have properly equipped dockyards situated in the cheapest centre of production. In order to continue this great annual outlay upon the Navy it was necessary that the Government should take the country along with them as well as the House of Commons. It was stated by Lord Goschen in introducing the Navy Estimates in 1899 that a Supplementary Estimate was needed because a large sum had been taken from a special fund in Russia for Navy purposes. It might not be always possible to give the grounds for which money was asked for the Navy. What he felt in regard to the Vote for new construction was that sufficient cause had not been made out for raising it to the figure at which it stood. It might not be possible to do that in public. The consideration which he wished specially to put before the hon. Gentleman was one which had been already referred to, and that was whether it would not be possible to appoint a Committee of the House with power to sit in secret session, as the Foreign Relations Committee did in America, and whether fuller information could not be imparted to those Members of the House who were most qualified, irrespective of Party, to serve on such a Committee. He believed if the Navy Estimates had the support of a Committee of that kind there would be much less disposition. either in the House or the country, to cavil at the details of this great expenditure with which the country was burdened. He would always be, as he had always been, in favour of voting the fullest provision for the requirements of the Fleet, and he submitted the suggestion as to whether it was not possible to take the House of Commons more into the confidence of the Admiralty, hoping that it might be seriously considered. He believed the suggestion could be worked out without any great difficulty.

*Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said he knew some of the hardships involved in the new principle of entering boys at twelve years of age, because it shut out those of a class who, prior to the introduction of the new scheme, had an opportunity of entering the Navy. That would apply to the engineer class of officers most particularly. He did not in the least suggest snobbery, but there could be no doubt that little opportunity would be given to certain people to gain admittance in future to the higher ranks of the Navy. He did not suppose in these democratic days anyone would attempt to argue that all the best brain was reserved for a few. In the United States and other countries very many of the best men came from the most humble beginnings. He thought it would be shutting out a great element of strength to absolutely close the doors to some of those who had had an opportunity hitherto of access. He desired to raise a question affecting training. They were told by the Secretary to the Admiralty that the training of the Navy in the future was bound to be scientific, mainly concerning gunnery and the care of machinery, and that all boys as soon as they went into training ships would have their attention directed to those matters. It occurred to him that there would be a great need in future for schoolmasters to prepare the minds of the lads for the higher examinations they would have to pass at a later period for the posts of petty and warrant officers, and so on. Of course in the old days the seamanship instructor was a great man on the ship, when promotion was dependent almost entirely on good seamanship. That had entirely disappeared and a new state of affairs had come into existence, and a scientific knowledge would be needed even among the lower deck to enable them to make that scientific progression expected of them in gunnery, torpedo work, signalling, and so on. At the present moment he understood that no schoolmaster was carried on any ship afloat. He would suggest that the Admiralty should consider the desirability of introducing into all sea-going ships carrying, say, a crew of 200 or more, a schoolmaster, who should be carefully selected. He wished to ask the hon. Gentleman a Question in regard to a matter which was referred to in the First Lord's Statement. He referred to the assimilation of the scale of the Marines to the scale approved for the Army both with regard to pay and allowances. Would that assimilation be extended to separation money? Now there was an undertaking on the part of the Admiralty to equalise the condition of the Marine with that of the soldier because it was held to be practically impossible to have different rates of pay prevailing for these services. What he wanted to know was whether the Admiralty was acting actually on an equality basis if they ignored the claims of the Marine to the separation money which the soldier who was married received when abroad. This was a matter of considerable interest to many, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman would be able to give some satisfaction upon it.

MR. GROVES (Salford, S.) said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University spoke with authority on all matters relating to education. Whether boys were to take their place in the services or in the ordinary walks of life, any opinion which the right hon. Gentleman gave on their education deserved attention. He had had experience in his own family of various methods of naval education. One of his boys entered the Navy some ten years ago, and had had a successful career. A second boy who afterwards entered some four or five years later had also been successful. He had a third boy who would soon apply for entrance. His opinion was that the most recent innovation was one which was likely to have considerable advantages in the matter of education, and in the future of the Navy. He did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it would be wise to leave the education of officers to the age of eighteen, because the earlier they had the environment round the young life the more likely were they to develop their predilection in favour of the career they were going to take. It was possible for the boys themselves, after running through the earlier period of training, if found by the parents to be unfit for the career, or if the boys expressed a definite distaste for it to be withdrawn from the service. He had found in his own experience that it was of the greatest possible advantage to give boys an early naval environment. The fate of the country might depend on the natural inclination of officers for their work and their scientific training, and, if their selection was left to a later period of life, valuable time for training would be wasted which the most recent change in regard to entrance would enable them to improve. It must not be forgotten that under the new system youngsters did not make a selection of the particular branch of the service to which they eventually attached themselves till a later period. They were now to be put through the same curriculum and training up to a certain period, and afterwards it was determined by selection, merit, or efficiency which branch they should enter. He thought this was a considerable gain under the new system. The natural bent was given full play, and that was also a great advantage over the old system.

He would take this opportunity of asking the Civil Lord for information on some of the figures in the Estimates. He looked with regret on the fact that we had not provided for an equal number of boys under training who were eventually to become our seamen, as was the case last year. The number had been decreased from 6,200 to 5,000, though there was a provision for 360 boys under training of the artificer class which did not appear last year. There was an increase in the amount of prizes given for shooting, which was a step in the right direction. Our seamen gunners ought to be encouraged more than in the past to acquire the art of good shooting; and money prizes acted as a great incentive to this as well as mere kudos winning. The hon. Member for Clare spoke of the Coastguard gunnery practice as "firing at nothing at all," but was the hon. Member himself not really firing at "nothing at all" in the speech he had just made?

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was firing at the hon. Gentleman; and he did not know whether that was firing at nothing at all.

***Mr. GROVES** said the hon. Member for Clare might have been firing at the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, but at any rate he could not believe that the hon. Gentleman was firing at him. If so he paid him a very great compliment. The hon. Member had complained that during the autumn manœuvres the Fleet had not made its base in different parts of Ireland, but one portion of the torpedo destroyer fleet had its base at Kingstown and in Dublin harbour; and another portion of the Home Fleet had its base at Bantry Bay, so that the hon. Member would see that Ireland was not altogether neglected. He was quite sure that if the hon. Member would continue to press the matter upon the Civil Lord, it might be arranged that all future naval engagements should take place round the coast of Ireland.

Mr. BUCHANAN said that the discussion of the past two days had amply justified the few observations he had made on the subject of finance when he seconded the Resolution then before the House, and endeavoured to impress on the Committee that the present provision of naval force far exceeded the two-Power standard. That contention had been supported by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of House and emphasised by the right hon. Member for West Bristol. There was no doubt that the general result of the discussion was that the Committee was impressed with the view that at the present moment we had a more than sufficient naval force for any probable eventuality in any naval war in which we might be engaged. He had endeavoured to bring that to the test of any reasonable interpretation of the two-Power standard, and he believed he had shown that we were able to meet any such contingency in any part of the world. While there was in many quarters of the House a disinclination to propose specific decreases either of expenditure, shipbuilding, or men, there was a widespread desire, which came out very clearly in the course of the debate, that a stop should be put to the increases that were now going on, more particularly when hon. Members became aware of the fact that within the four corners of the Estimates there was involved not merely the voting of the specific sums included in the Estimates as initial expenditure, but large increases in future years. He thought the Committee should get some assurance from the Government on this point. We were constantly getting committed to small sums of initial expenditure, like £5,000, £10,000, or £20,000, which might result in an additional expenditure of millions. There was the case of the two dockyards, which would involve, when they were completed, an annual charge of hundreds of thousands of pounds being placed on the Estimates. We could not but fail to recognise that the present times were not only critical but transitional. Critical because of the naval war in the Far East; but surely we might draw the conclusion that being in a position of great naval superiority—and acknowledged to be so—we could fairly offer to hold our hand and rest in peace. Still more was that argument good if we looked at these as transitional times in regard to naval warfare and naval defence. Many disputable points in regard to naval warfare were being put to the test and it would be only prudent to hold our hands, if possible, with a view to profit by the experience and lessons to be drawn from the war in the Far East. There had been no answer to the contention of the hon. Member for Dewsbury and the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean in regard to the expenditure on battleships. The Admiralty were taking the initial steps which would involve an expenditure of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 on a type of battleship which they themselves acknowledged was not the best available type.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said that these ships had been laid down some six weeks ago, and it was not possible to alter them now.

MR. BUCHANAN said that the Admiralty might have begun to lay down these ships six weeks ago, but that only shifted the responsibility further back and did not affect his argument. There was another point which he wished to put forcibly to the Admiralty which showed still more the unwisdom of the present expenditure of the Department; and that was, that in all probability the plans for the new and improved type of battleship would be ready in the autumn of this year. If the new type was more powerful than the present and was likely to be adopted not only by ourselves but by foreign Powers, it would have been wisdom, from a financial point of view, for the Admiralty to hold their hands so as to have these new vessels of the best possible improved type. Another point on which the Committee should have some information was the distribution of the Fleet at the present moment. It appeared to him somewhat strange that there should be the enormous naval force there was in certain seas compared with that we held at home. There were squadrons in parts of the world where no other nation had any naval force whatever. Taking the numbers from the Navy List we had thirty-eight vessels on the China Station; in the Mediterranean we had no less than fifty-one vessels of all sorts and kinds. We had been increasing our naval forces in the Mediterranean out of all proportion to any increase going on in the French Navy, which was our most formidable rival in those waters. We had in that sea nearly double the number of vessels contained in the combined Channel and Cruiser Squadrons. That distribution appeared to be somewhat strange, because the naval strength of the country ought to be retained principally in home waters. Then the South Atlantic Squadron, with alternate headquarters at Gibraltar and Sierra Leone, had been constituted. No explanation of that had been given, although it was stated yesterday that that squadron was looked upon with a certain amount of doubt and wonder by many naval authorities. As regarded the East Indian and Pacific Squadrons, they were quite small, but he thought they could be reduced even below their present limits, as no other Power, with the exception of America, had ships in that part of the world. He thought some explanation should be given of the changes that had taken place.

*SIR **JOHN COLOMB** (Great Yarmouth) said that with reference to the distribution of the naval forces of the country, he thought the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had lost sight of the fact that they could not divide the sea. While he admitted the gravity of the naval expenditure, it appeared to him to be absolutely unavoidable. He agreed in going as far as was necessary and no further; but they would all admit that the naval expenditure had reached a point at which it became very serious. They had, however, to remember that the Empire was a sea Empire and that there was no comparison possible between it and any other Empire in the world. The national expenditure both in ships and in *personnel* would continue to increase whatever they did. His own view—and he held it more strongly the older he became—was that the Empire would have to wake up to its responsibilities and share this burden. In talking about naval expenditure they should not forget the broad fact that this was a sea Empire or nothing, and that if it was a sea Empire all parts should assist in preserving it. As an illustration of that argument, he saw on page 11 of the Estimates a charge for twenty-five Royal Navy Reserve Officers allotted to Naval Reserves in Australasia. The revenue of Australasia was greater than the revenue of Japan, and they all knew what Japan was doing. Why should Australasia escape her duties and liabilities in connection with the Navy? He admitted that naval expenditure would continue to increase; but he looked to a better co-operative system between all parts of the Empire to provide the necessary expenditure. There were those who said that the naval forces of the country were now powerful enough, and that there was no need to do any more. He did not think that they could stop. They could stop doing what was unnecessary; but they could not stop doing what was necessary. Suppose it was found that the number of British ships exceeded the ships of a combination of Powers by ten or twelve. Was this country going to stop and wait until the others came up to it? If it did, then when the other countries reached equality they would have ships of a superior kind to ours, which would be out of date, because every ship was an improvement on another ship. What was necessary was to take a reasonable view, to examine expenditure and see that nothing that was not required was asked for. He did not think there was anything to complain of in the Estimates. During the last fifteen or sixteen years the Admiralty had been conducted in a businesslike way; but the more criticism there was in this House of a really reasonable character the more the Admiralty would look into matters.

There was, he thought, one branch of expenditure which showed a tendency towards exaggeration. He thought there was danger in imagining that this Empire demanded a very great naval *personnel*, and he thought he saw a tendency on the part of the Admiralty in that direction. He protested against that. The real truth was that the Navy was so entirely different from the Army that no analogy as regarded *personnel* could be drawn between them. In contemplating a reserve for the Army it was necessary to calculate on something that could not be estimated. In a land war it was not the enemy they had most to fear but disease. Disease could not be helped, but it might be mitigated. That was not the case in the Navy. The sanitary condition of the Fleet did not change when it passed from a state of peace to a state of war. All the conditions that prevailed in peace remained in war; and it was, therefore, obvious that it was very much easier to arrive at the standard of what the *personnel* of the Fleet should be than in the case of the Army. He mentioned that because he thought the general trend of policy was to exaggerate the proportions of a reserve *personnel* required. They knew exactly the number of warships fit for service and they knew the number of men required to man them. There would be no wastage through disease, but only the number actually killed or wounded. The conditions of modern warfare had greatly changed. In the old days a ship might become a slaughter-house and still survive, but that was not the case now. Did not the present war emphasise that very point? The naval reserve was there, but the ships were wanting. He would therefore ask the Secretary to the Admiralty to consider whether he was not going a little too far as regarded *personnel*. He would conclude where he began. He thought it was the true policy to speak out plainly in regard to the duties and obligations of the outside Empire, in order that all citizens of the Empire should agree to share the burden of the Fleet, without which the Empire could not exist. The present arrangement was not right and should not continue. The increasing expenditure might weigh down the popularity of the Navy, and then there would be a reaction which would drag down the Navy to a low standard, which would be as bad for the Colonies as for this country.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he thought it might be convenient if he now answered the Questions which had been put, and if necessary he would answer further Questions later. With reference to the point mentioned by his right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University—who approached the subject with great knowledge, and whose remarks deserved to be received with great respect—with regard to the early age at which boys were admitted to the Navy, his right hon. friend said that the early age had been already tried and had been found wanting. That was certainly true, but he thought that the conditions under which it had been tried were sufficient to account for its failure. The present system had very few features in common with the old system, under which boys were put on board ship under conditions not suitable to children of their tender age, and under conditions of education generally which applied to the Navy of that day, but which no longer applied. The conditions now ensured at Osborne were such that the boys would in every respect, both physical and educational, have at least as great advantages as in any private or public school in the country. As to the suggestion that the Admiralty ought to seek advice on educational matters, he would say that the first thing they did with regard both to Osborne and to the general scheme of naval education was to go to the University of Cambridge, which his right hon. friend represented, and to secure one of its most distinguished sons, Professor Ewing. Not only had they thus secured the highest and best advice on educational subjects, but through Professor Ewing they were kept in the closest personal touch with all the greatest educational authorities in the country. The suggestion that it would be an advantage if the inspection of Osborne was carried out under the auspices of the Board of Education was a new one to which he would not like to give a reply for, or against, off-hand, but he would undertake that it should receive the fullest consideration. With regard to the wastage, the Admiralty did not contemplate any appreciable wastage right up to, or nearly up to, the age of eighteen. They contemplated a considerable wastage up to the end of the first year at Osborne, by which time they expected to be able to eliminate nearly all who did not show sufficient qualifications to make them desirable naval officers. There was one very forcible consideration, not educational but naval, which weighed against any proposal to fill up from outside sources. The First Lord of the Admiralty had recently stated that the sea was one and the Navy was one, and that unity of the Empire was a most important feature which they could not afford in any way to injure. Unless it was absolutely necessary they should jealously guard against any action which would introduce division or section into any class of the Navy. It was originally considered whether there should be two rival schools, one at Osborne and another at Dartmouth, or whether the boys should all go to one school. The idea of having two schools was very attractive in many respects, but the Admiralty came to the conclusion that the principle of the unity of the Navy was of such importance that they could not afford to disregard it.

The hon. Member for Leith had complained that the Committee did not get sufficient information on certain points. The Admiralty were anxious to give all the information possible, but purely on financial grounds it was not always desirable to say too much, because there were such things as countries building and providing against one another, and if they said too much about what they were going to do and exactly how and why they were going to do it, it was not at all unlikely that other people would do the same thing and thus cause us further expenditure. With regard to Rosyth the Admiralty had given practically all the information in their possession. No great naval establishment could be designed or even considered until after the most careful examination of the site had been carried out and the Admiralty experts had made their report. The Admiralty had not yet received the report; in fact, the detailed examination was still going on; when the examination had been completed, and the particulars were before the Admiralty, the Government proposals would be prepared and laid before Parliament with the least possible delay.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said he mentioned Rosyth merely as an example. His point was that, much as the Committee would always value expert opinion, it could not wholly relinquish its responsibility with regard to public expenditure. In some respects he was afraid the Committee leaned too much on expert opinion and too little on its own judgment.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he did not for a moment suggest that the Admiralty had any right to act on the advice of their experts without submitting their proposals to the House, but simply that they could not submit their proposals until they had considered the result of their experts' investigations. As to the suggested Estimates Committee, the Prime Minister had really answered that point. The hon. Member for Devonport had raised a very legitimate question as to the field of selection for cadetships, and it might be a satisfaction to him to know that on the last entry three sons of engineer officers in the Navy had actually obtained nomination. There would be no narrowing of the ground for nomination by the First Lord; that would be done only by the committee of selection, which consisted of naval officers and civilians skilled in education. A further question raised by the hon. Member was with regard to separation money for the Marines. Considerable advantages had been given to the Marines to correspond to the increased pay of the Army. The Admiralty had the fullest sympathy on general grounds with the suggestion that this separation or lodging money should be granted, but the conditions practically precluded it from being done. The money was really given not as a separation allowance to the wives and children, but as a lodging allowance to the men themselves, because accommodation was not provided for them in barracks. On board ship lodging was provided; consequently the Marine was not entitled to the allowance when afloat. Moreover, the Marines, when on shore, were under the Army Act, under which the system of lodging allowances obtained on the ground he had stated; but when the Marines were on board ship they were under the Naval Discipline Act, which recognised no such system. Therefore, to give a separation allowance to Marines afloat would raise the much larger question of whether it would not necessarily have to be given also to all seamen of the Navy. On the grounds of policy such an allowance could not very well be made. With regard to carrying a schoolmaster on every ship, that would be a very large departure, and one which was not likely to commend itself to the Navy. Every boy who went through the curriculum of a training ship ought to have the necessary instruction in stoke-hold and mechanician's duties, and in gunnery, but it did not follow that that instruction would best be given by schoolmasters. The question raised by the hon. Member for East Perth had already been fully discussed. While there was considerable force in the argument that a new ship should not be laid down when there was a prospect of better designs being produced within a short time, it should be borne in mind that if that practice was adopted they would never lay down any ships at all, because they were always at work trying to improve designs. There was no method by which ships could be laid down with certainty except that of determining to lay them down at a certain time to the best designs then available. If Noah had proceeded on the principle suggested by the hon. Member, the ark would not have been completed yet. The matter had been fully considered, and the balance of advantage had appeared to lie in laying down the ships at once.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that both sides were agreed that the Estimates were enormous; the difference between them was that they on the Opposition side held it to be the duty of this country, as the supreme Naval Power in the world, to take the initiative in trying to bring to an end this ruinous naval competition. The Prime Minister had refused to take the initiative and they contended that he was wrong. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that it was not for him to take the initiative, but that was a perfectly monstrous proposition coming from a Government which was responsible for one of the greatest wars of aggression that the century had known. It was said that ours was only a defensive policy, but France said the same thing. The hon. Gentleman opposite had said we had no motive for a Navy except to defend ourselves. He was glad that the Liberal Party had pledged itself to the proposition that it was the duty of this country to take the initiative and declare that this policy was ruining the country, and they ought to sit down with other countries in order to see if some means could not be invented to bring their system of Navy expenditure to an end. The hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth said he had never clamoured for expenditure upon the Navy, although he was afraid that these Estimates must grow larger on account of the automatic increases. The Secretary to the Admiralty had somewhat misstated his position, which was that when the Shipbuilding Vote was normal it amounted to one-third of the whole Navy Estimates, but the Shipbuilding Vote would grow. He would go back to the time when it was stationary, and then it would be found that for a series of years the Shipbuilding Vote was about one-third. If that view was correct the Estimates they were passing to-day would involve Navy Estimates amounting to £50,000,000 in a comparatively short period of years. He desired to express his disappointment that the Prime Minister could not see his way to go beyond the *non possumus* attitude he had taken up.

The Member for Perthshire had introduced a new and a dangerous doctrine, for he understood that he challenged the present distribution of the Fleet. He had never hesitated to challenge the authority of the Admiralty on many points but there were things as to which in his humble judgment the Admiralty's authority was pontifical, and for them to say in this House that the Admiralty ought to have a larger or a smaller number of ships in the Mediterranean or anywhere else was a position that he could not take up for a moment. He said that because they had the whole thing discussed at the time when the hon. Member for Perthshire was not a Member of the House, when the Mediterranean scare took place, and when the demand was made by the Navy League and its supporters in the Press that we should have a larger squadron in the Mediterranean. The decision of the House of Commons on that matter was that the whole responsibility must lie with the Board of Admiralty. On the question of education he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire chose to castigate him yesterday for some views he had expressed. He did not object to this modified "Britannia" scheme of education, and he had no objection to the curriculum or the mode of selection of the boys, which was rather more competitive than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge seemed to think. They were classified, upon an interview, after making them read and write and testing them in various ways. His objection was that naval opinion was not unanimous by any means upon the question of the early *versus* the later age. As to the early age his objection was on behalf of the Navy and on behalf of the people who supported it. The system of selecting boys at the age of twelve and keeping them in an expensive school, to which not 5 per cent. of the parents of this country could afford to send their children, meant the shutting out of 95 per cent. of the boys of the country, which was a wrong to the Navy, a wrong to the boys of this country, and a wrong to their parents. That was the result of the system, and he greatly preferred the system which had been adopted in the United States which took the boys at a later age, paid the whole of their expenses out of the public funds, and the parents were not allowed to spend a dollar for the support of their children. He preferred the Admiralty mode of selection, but at the age of sixteen or eighteen years there was not the least objection to competition. His objection to the naval education system was that it was not possible for these boys to enter the Navy as officers. He held that the Navy or the country would never be justly treated until at every step of his career the naval officer was paid by the State a sum sufficient to meet his expenses and from the earliest day he should be self-supporting.

He wished to know what was the present rule of the Admiralty with regard, not to wages or salaries, but the extraordinary expenses which naval officers had been allowed and encouraged to make. The practice of permitting naval officers to spend out of their own money on the service of the ship to which they belonged was what they called "painting the ship." That was a gross flagrant and scandalous abuse if it existed at all, because it was most unfair to the poorer men. Last year he was told that the practice was permitted, but not encouraged. He contended that it ought neither to be permitted or encouraged, because it was absolutely wrong. There was one particular class of officer who he believed considered that he had suffered a great deal from this system and its results. In times past it had been believed that this system of allowing officers to pay for "painting the ship" was a mode of giving a preference to the rich. He wanted to know whether the Admiralty had stopped this practice altogether, and he hoped they would let it be known that it would not be permitted, and that officers would not be allowed to expend any of their own money on the public service. They were spending £42,000,000 on the Navy, and were they going to be mean enough to ask a single naval officer to spend a single penny? He wished also to know whether there was any justification or foundation for the complaint that certain kinds of naval officers had not fared so well as others in the matter of promotion. He knew that was a delicate subject, but that was what had been stated, and he could refer to statements made upon it in public journals. There was the specialised officer and the non-specialised. The complaint had been made to him that the non-specialised officer, who was usually the richest officer, fared better in promotion than the others, and that of the others the navigating officer, who as a rule was the poorest officer, fared worst of all. He had seen a table of information which supported this complaint, and he thought it right to bring the matter to the attention of the Admiralty in the hope that the hon. Gentleman would give a frank statement upon it, and that if there was anything unusual or abnormal he would see that it was either corrected or sufficiently explained.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the hon. Gentleman opposite had made a complaint which was not new when he said that the promotion of the specialised officer was as a rule less rapid than that of the non-specialised officer. He did not think that was the case. If there was any complaint, the hon. Gentleman would find it was that the specialised officer obtained more rapid promotion than the non-specialised officer. The hon. Gentleman made a complaint that the officers of a man-of-war had to spend a certain portion of their substance in ornamenting and painting the ship. No doubt the grievance did exist, and it was entirely due to the niggardliness of the Admiralty. But there were means of escape even from that. There was a means which was extremely popular throughout the service, namely, the method of getting the supply from the dockyard itself. He had heard of an officer who said his only complaint in regard to the men on board his ship was that there was not a competent thief amongst them. In regard to cadets, the hon. Gentleman had complained that the system excluded boys who would make very good naval officers. Any boy would make a good officer when put into the Navy. It was the Navy that made the officer and not the officer the Navy. He did not think the suggestion of the hon. Member for Devonport in regard to appointing schoolmasters to go on board the ships was a wise one. He did not think there was anything comparable to the education a boy got in the Navy between the ages of thirteen and twenty. He attributed that largely to the absence of the schoolmaster. The naval officer gave the boy that practical education which he rejoiced to possess himself. If they said they would take a large number of boys at thirteen, and charge the parents nothing for their education, the result would undoubtedly be to get a large number sent into the Navy for the sole purpose of getting education. Having got their education at the expense of the State, a large number would resign. He thought that would be quite a sufficient objection to changing a system which had worked very well.

They were told that the bluejackets were to have no training whatever in masts and yards. He presumed that the whole idea of sail was to be eliminated from the life of the sailor. It was perfectly true that he would get a certain amount of boating, but experience in boating would not enable him to put a ship about. There might be a war in which it would be absolutely necessary to take possession of a considerable fleet of sailing ships. The number of sailing ships was considerably larger than the number of steamships. What a nice position it would be if they had not a man who could take charge of one of these sailing vessels and put her about! He suggested that one ship might be kept where the handling of masts and yards would be taught, so as to have a certain number of men who would be sailors as well as seamen. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had suggested that the time had arrived when the Navy should be treated as the Army, and that naval men should be put under a system of short service of two, three, or four years, and then drafted into a Reserve. He hoped the Admiralty would not entertain any notion of that kind. It might be excellent for the Army to have short service—he could not offer an opinion on that—but it was not suitable for the Navy. The artificial conditions of life in the Navy required that men should enter the service young and be brought into such a condition of mind that they freely accepted life on board ship. He trusted his hon. friend would give, on behalf of the Admiralty, an assurance that they were not prepared to plunge into a system of short service with the large Reserve suggested. He was in favour of a very considerable increase in the Naval Reserve drawn from the merchant service. The Naval Reserve at present numbered about 26,000. It might be increased to 30,000, 40,000, or even 50,000. The Naval Reserves, as they existed now, were not really reserve men. They were really an infusion of an active element if we mobilised the Navy. Therefore he hoped that something more would be done than was proposed at present.

He most sincerely regretted the existence of the Naval Volunteers. He thought they never could be of any use. The arguments by which he supported the Royal Naval Reserve were the same factors as those by which he condemned the Naval Volunteers. The Admiralty had recently built barracks at Portsmouth to accommodate 6,000 men. Admiral Fisher, who had introduced an enormous number of improvements in regard to the Navy, had for the first time issued a rule which enabled men to leave the barracks at night. That was absolutely the right system. What was the result. Out of the 4,000 who had beds in the barracks not one-third remained in the barracks. That showed the popularity of the new rule, and also that the barracks were built four times as large as they need be. In regard to the masts of the ships, he asked whether the Admiralty had considered the extreme danger of the present heavy masts. The ordinary error in shooting was a vertical error. A shot was fired either too high or too low. The result of that was, as experience had shown, that the tops of the masts of the battleships in action suffered more than any other part. If these heavy armoured masts did get struck by projectiles, the result would be that they would come down and jam the turrets, or put out of action some of the guns. He earnestly impressed on his hon. friend to consider whether these heavy masts could not be absolutely done away with. Of course it might be said that masts were necessary for hoisting out boats, but that could be provided for by derricks. He trusted his hon. friend would forgive him for bringing this consideration before him, but it was not without importance.

In conclusion he wished to make a few remarks on the general question. The hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth had asked why the Colonies should not make a further contribution towards the cost of the Navy. At present the Colonies subscribed not one-hundredth part of the total cost of the Navy. As a matter of fact they subscribed only £300,000 in all.

MR. PRETYMAN said that India paid £100,000.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that India paid £100,000; but that was not a voluntary contribution. England exacted it just as she required a contribution from India of £1,500,000 for our Army. But the Colonies, from whom we could not exact or require these contributions, and which they must give voluntarily if at all, had at this moment practically withheld all assistance to the expenditure on the Navy, on which their existence depended. On the other hand, they wanted commercial preferences, were determined to maintain their political independence, and equally determined not to contribute to the Navy, by which alone their independence could be maintained. Whatever was to be done for the Navy must be done for it by ourselves alone. That made it so important that we should see to it that we were not exceeding the real needs of the Empire. He himself had put the point, which had been enforced by the hon. Member for Exeter, and still more powerfully enforced by the right hon. Member for West Bristol, and which had not yet been answered—that the present Construction Estimate was not a two-Power but a three-Power Estimate, judged by expenditure, which was a fair test. The very simple Question put the day before, he repeated now, and hoped the Committee would get a satisfactory answer, it was—What was it that had caused the Government to depart from the two-Power standard to the extent of doubling their naval requirements? It might be that there was an answer to that Question; that the hon. Gentleman would be able to say that he knew the answer but could not give it because of the exigencies of the public service. But he did think that if the time had arrived when there should be a three-Power standard the matter should be dealt with by Parliament. If the hon. Gentleman disputed the figures, he invited him to explain how it was that we got less value for the money we spent on our Navy than the three largest naval Powers in Europe.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he wanted to ask if the hon. Gentleman was in a position to assure the Committee or guarantee that, although he refused information to the Committee, other people, as he described them—presumably other naval Powers—were not as well acquainted with the policy and plans of the Admiralty as he was himself. The neglect of other Government Departments in allowing official information to leak out during the past few years, had rather destroyed, at any rate had shaken, confidence that the Admiralty, any more than their other Departments, was able to keep their secret plans and designs from other people. That was very important, especially when this enormous and alarming growth of expenditure on the Navy was contemplated. The Committee should have, as far as possible, a full, complete, and unreserved statement that the money they were now asked to provide would not be exceeded in next year's Estimates. He wished to refer to the question of the education of our ordinary seamen. During the last fifteen years he had signed vast numbers of papers for boys who were entering the Navy—sons of agricultural labourers, fishermen, and tradesmen who loved the sea and naturally wanted to join the Navy—and two-thirds of these boys were certainly far below the standard of education to which they should have attained to make them efficient under the new system of naval service. Everybody knew that the work of ordinary seamen in the Navy was approaching year by year more nearly to that of a mechanic. It required high intelligence. He did not know anything about the possibility of carrying schoolmasters at sea, but this he did know, that for better effective service in the Navy a vast number of boys who had passed through his hands, should have some months, at any rate, of good training under a highly capable instructor or schoolmaster. That was a matter worthy of serious consideration by the Admiralty. He joined the hon. Member for King's Lynn in the regret that the teaching of sailoring work to the men of the Navy had been abandoned. He meant the manipulation of sails and yards, the bending of sails, and the management generally of sailing vessels. It would be a great misfortune to the nation if, in time of war, mercantile vessels were captured and fifty men could not be mustered capable of re-rigging them and repairing the damage caused by the capturing gunboats, and sailing them into port. A short time, therefore, should be devoted to imparting to the boys proficiency in the manipulation of sailing vessels, and certainly under no circumstances should it be abandoned altogether.

Mr. PRETYMAN: They are trained to manipulate sailing boats.

Mr. BROADHURST said he was bound to say that he feared the capacity of "Jack Tar" in the management of small boats left much to be desired. He did not know whether it was the fault of the men or of the boats, but there were large numbers of fighting men on board ship who found the greatest difficulty in getting a boat through the surf on the sea-coast, even when that was not heavy. There had been some sad and disastrous experiences of late in that respect; and that looked bad for our naval reputation. If the hon. Gentleman would make inquiry into this question he would find he was perfectly justified in making that statement.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said that the discussion, two nights ago, on the question of contributions by the Colonies to the cost of the Navy had, he was glad to recognise, already borne good fruit. The hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth, who had as Imperial a soul as any Member of the House, and who knew better than most the needs of the Navy, opened his speech by advocating that the Colonies should subscribe towards the legitimate cost of the Navy. He was amazed that Englishmen and Scotsmen in the House who regarded a strong Navy as a matter of vital importance, did not take more pains in pointing out to the Colonies their duty in this matter of contributing to the expenditure on the Navy. It was, therefore, to the financial aspect of the question that he would address himself. He did not imagine that anything he could say or anything Irishmen could say would induce the Admiralty to make any reduction in the Votes. Anything he could plead with reference to the poverty of Ireland would not induce the hon. Gentleman to make any change; but the Irish Members were, nevertheless, bound to do their duty to their constituents, to whom the Navy was of no use. He would only refer to the Colonies, because if the Colonies contributed to the Navy the Irish taxpayers would be relieved to a certain interest. He saw that out of a total of £6,000,000 sterling, which they were now asked to vote, the Colonies contributed only £76,000. Would any hon. Member say that that was a fair contribution from the great Colonies over the sea. It was said the other day that if the Suez Canal were blocked, vessels to the Cape, India, and Australia, would pass down the West Coast of Africa at the rate of one an hour. All that great carrying trade was secured by the Navy; without it the Colonies could not exist, and yet they only contributed £76,000 out of £6,000,000. It would be more worthy of the pride and honour of this country to refuse such a paltry and mean contribution. The Australian Commonwealth and New Zealand contributed £58,000. In connection with that, he should like to ask whether, in consideration of that insignificant contribution, the Australian Commonwealth had not made a bargain with the Admiralty that two out of the eight ships on the Station should be manned by Australians and New Zealanders, who were to be paid, not at the ordinary naval rate, but at special rates approximating more to colonial wages. A great part of the £58,000 would in that way go into the pockets of colonists. Was it not also a fact that the Australian Squadron was, in consideration of the contribution, to be kept up to eight cruisers, which were to be employed exclusively in the protection of the fisheries, and which were not to leave Australian waters. As regarded the distribution of the Fleet, he was an unsophisticated amateur; but it did seem to him that to keep eight cruisers on the Australian Station was a waste of money. He did not think that in the event of war France, Germany, Russia, or the United States would attack Australia. Why, therefore, keep eight cruisers on the Station? The taxpayer was a long-suffering individual. But this bargain with the Commonwealth ought to be the last straw.

He also wished to ask whether any representation had been made by the Admiralty or any other Department to Canada pointing out the benefit she derived from the protection of the Fleet on the Bermuda Station and the North Pacific Fleet, and whether she would make any contribution to the up-keep of those fleets. He understood such a communication had been sent; and he wished to know what answer had been received. He was amazed that such a prosperous colony as Canada had not contributed to the Navy. There was a misprint in the Estimates the other day, and he wondered whether the omission of Canada from the contributions was also accidental. He could not believe that Canada would be so mean and paltry as not to contribute to the Navy, to which Ireland, without any sea-borne trade, contributed between three and four millions sterling. It might be that Canada was looking forward to amalgamation with the United States. He himself believed that that would ultimately happen, and that might be the reason why Canada had not contributed to the Navy. He was in a state of wonderment as to how the country would be able to meet those constantly increasing Estimates. With the construction account increasing all other accounts would also increase; and in three or four years the

House would be asked for £10,000,000 more. As regarded the details of the Estimates no adequate explanation had yet been given; and he hoped it would be forthcoming. He intended to support the Amendment of his hon. friend the Member for East Clare. Even from an English standpoint the Navy ought not to exceed the two-Power standard; but now it was being arranged on a three-Power basis.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said that as representing a constituency in which a large number of dockyard employees lived, he desired to thank the Admiralty for laying down the new battleship at Devonport instead of having it built by contract, as was originally intended. That was of considerable value to the men; and the avoidance of change in the *personnel* of the dockyards was, he thought, very desirable. While he recognised the importance of keeping in touch with private shipbuilding yards, both as regarded construction and repairs, he wished to emphasise the importance of keeping the dockyards fully employed on construction and repairs. The dockyards were fitted with the most efficient appliances; and the work could be done better in them than in private yards, The Estimates had reached an alarming figure; but it should be remembered that in time of war the food supply of the country depended on the Navy. He thought it was of the first importance that the country should have a thoroughly strong and efficient Navy. Irish Members seemed to think that Ireland had a special grievance in regard to their contribution towards the maintenance of the Navy. They apparently had forgotten that last year this House was engaged in dealing with the land question and in effecting arrangements which would probably be more beneficial to the people than any legislation in reference to agrarian questions in any other country in the world. That was an evidence that this House was not less careful of the interests of Ireland than of those of any other part of the United Kingdom.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND remarked that Parliament had not given a single penny to Ireland. It had simply made arrangements for a loan which was likely to turn out very good business for the Treasury.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This matter is quite irrelevant to the subject under discussion.

MR. SPEAR earnestly hoped the Admiralty would continue their scheme for providing a strong Naval Reserve. The movement of the population from the country districts into the towns was such that, at no distant date, it would be extremely difficult to get strong lads for the Navy; hence it was desirable that the Admiralty should secure the services of men in case of need by getting them into the Reserve after they had passed through the Navy. He was fully confident that the Admiralty were doing their best to secure a fully efficient Navy, and as long as his constituents were satisfied that all economy consistent with efficiency was practised, they would not object to finding their share of the money. He strongly supported the view that it was only reasonable that the Colonies, who derived so much advantage from the Fleet, should contribute much more largely to its cost. They had given such full evidence of their loyalty and patriotism that he was confident that, if it was pointed out to them how altogether inadequate was their present contribution, they would at once see the desirability and justice of increasing it.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) desired to dissociate himself from the easy acquiescence of hon. Members on the Government side of the House with the enormous figures of the present Estimates, and with the fact that the present constructional programme pointed to an expenditure of £50,000,000 per annum in the course of two or three years. As, in addition, the works provided for under Naval Works Acts amounted to two or three millions a year, there was an admitted prospect of a permanent annual outlay of from £55,000,000 to £60,000,000. The Prime Minister had very properly pointed out that expenditure was dependent on policy, but it was really futile to fix a two-Power or a three-Power limit to naval expenditure until the Government had carried out the same clear idea as to what really was the policy to be pursued. The Government assigned to the Navy three different kinds of duties, and the question was whether some of them were not of the nature of impossibilities. The first was the defence of these shores. With that object all would agree. The second idea was that all our sea-borne commerce in every quarter of the globe should receive equal protection as well as our colonial and other possessions. Was not that really attempting the impossible? It was that that rendered the present rate of expenditure almost insupportable. The Estimates this year represented £1 per head of the population, with a prospect of their increasing to 25s. per head, or about one-fifth of the sum spent per head on food. According to the Blue-book recently issued by the Board of Trade, this country had about 7,000,000 tons of steam-driven, and about 1,500,000 tons of wind-driven ships, so that an expenditure of £42,000,000 represented £5 a ton on all the shipping of the country. Moreover, it represented 16s. per ton on all the shipping cleared in this country, and it amounted to 50 per cent. on the total freight earnings in the year. These facts gave rise to the question whether we had not reached the point where the premium of insurance was in excess of the risk, whether it was not time to reconsider the general lines of the policy to be pursued, and whether by having a large Fleet in being around these shores we were not more securely protecting our sea-going shipping than by spreading cruisers all over the world. In view of the greater mobility of cruisers and battleships now as compared with the beginning of the last century, the wisdom of maintaining various stations all over the globe was open to question. Might it not be well to have only one central station—the British Isles—with coaling stations dotted about in all quarters. Under such a system the Admiralty would be able to make much greater use of a Naval Reserve scheme. It would decrease the active list, increase the use of the Reserves, and diminish the total cost of manning the Navy.

With regard to the question of recruiting in Scotland, he thought he was right in saying that there were only 300 or 400 men drawn, not from the fishing villages, but from Glasgow, Leith, Edinburgh, and other manufacturing towns. He urged upon the Admiralty the necessity of doing something to improve recruiting in Scotland, because if they did not get a fair proportion from Scotland they failed to have in the Navy a microcosm of the nation. He would not detain the House by outlining any method, but he had suggested more than once that it might be possible to have one or two Scotch ships officered by Scotchmen, and in other ways specially identified with Scotland. He understood that Australia and New Zealand had two ships set apart for their own recruits, and surely what was possible there was possible in Scotland. His opinion was that it ought to be possible for a young man to enter the Army or the Navy just as easily as it was for him to join any of the learned professions. He hoped that in the future "painting the ship" would be absolutely prohibited and arrangements made by which an officer could live upon his pay without assistance from his parents. Nothing was said in the First Lord's Statement about the scheme of retirement, and he wished to impress upon the Admiralty the desirability of knowing and seeing clearly what object the Navy was to serve. Were they to undertake the impossible duty of providing a defence all over the world for every ship which sailed under the British flag? It was time to bring to an end this enormous expenditure on the Navy. The insurance premium had become greater than the risk. In his opinion it would be better to take the risk, and to be content with a small, well-equipped Navy in the home waters ready to go anywhere it might be required.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) said the Prime Minister stated yesterday that he adhered to the view of the two-Power standard, and the right hon. Gentleman further stated that this principle had never been exceeded, and was not exceeded in the present Estimates. Was this in consonance with the facts and figures? He hoped the Committee would receive from the Secretary to the Admiralty a clearer and more detailed statement than had yet been given of the co-relation between the principle and the practice of the Government with regard to the Navy. The principle that the Navy must be kept up to the two-Power standard was accepted on all sides. But, while the total expenditure on the Navy was £42,000,000, the expenditure needed by the two-Power standard did not exceed £24,000,000 in the case of Continental nations, or £27,000,000 if America were included. He hoped it was not in contemplation to advance to a three-Power standard.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said that in the answer given by the Secretary to the Admiralty there was not a word in reply to the very able and eloquent speech made by the hon. Member for East Clare. He was quite sure that it was not the hon. Member's intention to overlook that speech, and, when he came to reply, he hoped he would deal with the points raised by the hon. Member for East Clare as well as by the hon. Member for Kilkenny. He was surprised at the remarks of hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to the Colonies not contributing more towards the Navy. His colleagues' position was perfectly correct when they took exception to the fact that the Colonies were not called upon to contribute to the Navy, whereas Ireland was obliged to contribute £2,000,000 a year. What right had hon. Gentlemen representing English constituencies to ask Canada to make a contribution towards the Navy? The hon. Member for King's Lynn and the hon. Baronet the Member for Yarmouth had made a desperate onslaught upon the Colonies because in some instances they did not contribute enough, and in others they did not contribute at all. What had this country given Canada that she should be called upon to contribute to the Navy. This very Vote which they were about to pass was for His Majesty's Fleet. It had been asserted in this discussion that the object for which the Navy existed was to defend our trade and commerce on the seas. Did Canadian vessels carry that trade and commerce? No, the trade and commerce between this country and Canada and the Colonies was carried in English vessels, and therefore the Navy existed to defend our own trade and commerce and not the trade of Canada. He had read in the papers that Canada was raising an Army of 100,000 men which they would be able to bring up to a fighting force of 200,000. The Canadian Government spent money on the construction of ships to defend their own fisheries, and therefore they had their own little navy, which was a matter of importance to them. Therefore he did not think hon. Gentlemen opposite had anything to complain of in regard to Canada for she had rendered this country greater services than England had rendered to her. Canada in the moment of trouble came to the rescue of this country and now England was showing her gratitude by treating Canada with absolute scorn. Hon. Gentlemen opposite thought Irishmen ought to rejoice because certain vessels belonging to the Fleet had visited certain ports and harbours in Ireland, and that in consequence they should not take exception to the increased expenditure found in every page of these Estimates. They had always striven hard from the Irish Benches to make their position perfectly clear in regard to this expenditure, which was that the Navy was of no use to Ireland because Ireland had no commerce, for Irish trade had been destroyed by this country. That was why they could not joyfully vote such large sums towards the Navy, and that was why they protested against contributing a considerable proportion towards these Estimates, because the money was taken from a country which was absolutely incapable of bearing the burden put upon it. That was the position taken up by the hon. Member for East Clare. A Royal Commission had revealed that Ireland was taxed £3,000,000 too much. ["Oh, oh!"] He knew perfectly well that criticisms of that kind were not agreeable to hon. Gentlemen opposite, but Irishmen had a duty to perform. They often spoke of equality of treatment and it was frequently stated that Ireland got an equal share in everything. Ireland was represented in that House by eighty Members but three Members on the Treasury Bench could defeat the whole of the Irish representatives, for they had only to call in to their assistance those who cared nothing for Ireland. Even if they were Englishmen they would object to this expenditure and ask where was all this going to end? Years ago they were told that they had almost reached the extreme end of the Estimates, but since that time the amount had more than doubled. Ireland was taxed for the maintenance of the Navy in which they had no interest. What was the answer they got when they asked for a contribution towards technical education? They were told that they must vote this increase for the Navy and at the same time Ireland was refused a small amount towards education. As an Irish Member he felt it was his duty to enter a protest against expenditure which brought no benefit to Ireland, and he was quite confident that those who represented Ireland did not share in the joy of hon. Members opposite in regard to the magnificence and strength of the British Navy.

*MR. PRETYMAN said the hon. Member for Dundee had asked what steps had been taken to reduce the expenditure of naval officers upon their ships. On principle every one would agree that no inducements of any kind ought to be offered to naval officers to spend money out of their own pockets on the public service. The Admiralty were not prepared absolutely to forbid a sailor to spend money on his ship, which he regarded in a sense as his child, but they had largely increased the allowance for paint and brass-work. The question of naval bands had also been dealt with, and to a large extent the necessity for officers to contribute to their upkeep had been removed. With regard to promotion, he thought what had been said by the hon. Member for King's Lynn absolved him from the necessity of saying much on that point in reply to the hon. Member for Dundee. He could assure the hon. Member for Dundee that no advantage was given either to specialised officers or to what were called watch-keeping officers. The Board of Promotion considered these matters solely from the point of view of personal merit, and of advantage to the service. On the point of the proportion which the reserves should bear to the total *personnel* of the Navy, the Admiralty took their stand on the admirable Report of the Committee presided over by the right hon. Member for Berwick, and held that the total Reserve available on mobilisation should be 50 per cent. The Admiralty had endorsed and accepted the recommendations of the Committee to which he had referred with regard to short service. He thought his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn was in error in supposing that the system of allowing men to go out of barracks at night had been first introduced by the Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth. It was one which had been in force for a long time. The naval barracks had been designed to hold a certain number of men, giving the full cubic space which was necessary. It was recognised that the only time the barracks would be crowded would be in time of mobilisation, when it might be necessary, for a short period, to use the whole of the space available. That contingency had been arranged for by providing double the number of hammock fittings normally required. On mobilisation the naval barracks at Portsmouth would contain close on 6,000 men and officers, and in normal times about 4,000. The hon. Member for Leicester had raised a point in regard to the leakage of information from the Admiralty. He could tell the hon. Member that the subject had quite recently been engaging the most careful attention of the Board, but, from the nature of the case, to state any precautions which they were taking would render them valueless. As to the education of boys entering the Navy, he reminded the Committee that during the period they were in the training ship the boys received the careful attention of schoolmasters, and everything was done that could be done to improve their education. On the question of masts and yards, it must be of advantage to every man who went to sea to have a knowledge of masts and yards; but many factors had to be considered. They could not put a quart into a pint pot, and they must teach men all they could, within a given period, of what was most necessary. It would be impossible to maintain the instruction in masts and yards except at the expense of something else more necessary; but it should be remembered that in a mobilised fleet there would always be a certain number of naval reserve men who were merchant sailors and had the training the hon. Member for King's Lynn suggested.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I suggested that one training ship might be retained for instruction in masts and yards.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that point would certainly be borne in mind and considered, but he could not say more than that at the present time. With regard to the complaint of the hon. Member for Banff as to vessels for training purposes, there was a considerable number on the coasts.

MR. BROADHURST said the point was that these vessels seldom visited the remote parts of the coast.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he was afraid that what the hon. Member called the remote parts of the coast were places where there were shallow waters, and where it might not be safe for the vessels to go. As to the cost of the new scheme for the retirement of officers to permit of promotion, it would be about £25,000 a year. The hon. Member for Kilkenny asked some very detailed Questions. He hoped the hon. Member would excuse him if he said that he did not think they were Questions in which he took a very great personal interest. He was afraid that he should be wearying the House unduly if he were to go into all the matters raised by the hon. Member. He was anxious to meet the wishes of hon. Members from Ireland as fully as possible, and if it was their wish that he should read out the detailed explanations he was prepared to do it. He understood, however, from the hon. Member's countenance that he was absolved from doing that.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said not at all. The hon. Member must not read any absolution from his countenance at all. He presumed the hon. Member wanted to get his Vote, to-night, before dinner, and if that was the case the hon. Gentleman ought to answer one or two Questions; or kindly send the replies. There was one question which the hon. Member for Kilkenny asked in which he and many other people on his side of the House were interested, for their attention had been called to it. Was it a fact that the men on board the ships of the Australian Station were to get a special rate of pay arranged by the Commonwealth Government in accordance with the standard rate of wages prevailing in Australia? That was the first Question. Here was another one. Was it a fact that arrangements had been made that some of these ships in the new Australian Squadron should be manned exclusively by Australians? These were Questions which he ventured to say were quite as important and well worthy of being answered as many of the Questions that had been answered.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) hoped that the hon. Member would recognise the necessity of making inquiries on the points raised yesterday afternoon in reference to the Irish fisheries. It was a very serious question for fishermen along the coast of Kerry, that great ravages were made by trawlers for the simple reason that there were no gunboats to protect the fisheries. If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty would do something in that matter he would promise him that, so far as he was concerned, he would not have the same difficulty in the future as he had had in the past couple of days in getting his Estimates through.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that the hon. Member for East Clare had asked two Questions. These Questions he had noted and was about to answer. With regard to the pay of the men of the Australian Contingent, he had to state that those men would receive the rate of pay given to men in the Royal Navy, and over and above that rate they would receive at the end of their period of service a colonial addition. The answer to the Question as to the ships, was that there were three ships to be used as training ships and these would be manned by Australian crews. In making this arrangement, however, the Admiralty did not consider that they were granting any favour, as it was desirable that as large a number as possible in the Australian Colonies should be trained for this service. He had given very careful attention to the question of the fisheries, but he wished to say at once on behalf of the Admiralty that the Admiralty would on no account whatever hand over any ships or men of the Navy to any other jurisdiction whether it was to local authority or anyone else.

MR. FLAVIN: We only want the use of them where necessary.

*MR. PRETYMAN said what the Admiralty desired was that the ships which were on the coast of Ireland, or of the United Kingdom, should give every assistance to the local authority to carry out the Fisheries Regulations, whether inside or outside the 3-mile limit. The Admiral Commanding Coastguard and Reserves was now engaged on an inquiry into this matter. There were on the coast of Ireland two torpedo gunboats and three steam Coastguard cruisers. All the Coastguards were under the control of the Admiral Commanding, and so far as Ireland was concerned, the Rear Admiral at Queenstown was to act as his deputy, and he would be available for any representations that might be made to him upon the subject. He would visit the Irish Coastguard stations from time to time, and the Coastguards would be instructed to give every assistance in their power in carrying out the Fisheries Regulations under the supervision of the Admiral Commanding As to the question of the standard referred to by the hon. Members for King's Lynn and Exeter, he thought the Committee would not wish him to go over the whole ground again, but he would repeat that the Admiralty could not accept the tonnage or money standard. He would say in conclusion that he would rather stand up there to defend Estimates that were too large than to defend the Admiralty for not providing a Navy sufficient to meet the needs of the country.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 83; Noes, 284. (Division List No. 35.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.).
Ambrose, Robert
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Cameron, Robert
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)

Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dobbie, Joseph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,RtHn H(Somers't,E
Hogg, Lindsay
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Keswick, William
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks, N. R.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M.W.(Stalybridge)
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Robson, William Snowdon
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isleof Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent,Col.Sir C.E.H.(Sheff'd)
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)

Wallace, Robert
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk,Mid.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse,Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. O'MARA said that the result of the division showed that no matter what hon. Members might say, when it came to voting they voted for a strong Navy. He was not surprised that Englishmen took that view; but he had not changed his nationality. He wished to ask why the item (i.i) for special gratuities for services in South Africa had increased from £5,000, during the war, to £6,000?

*__MR. PRETYMAN__ said it was because the period of time for which such gratuities were to be granted was, on 20th February last, extended by the Treasury. Men who were not previously to receive gratuities would now receive them.

MR. O'MARA said that the explanation was satisfactory. On the main question, however, his view was that the Navy was of no good to Ireland, which had no seaborne trade. All Ireland had to do with the Navy was to help to pay the bill. The case he put before the Committee was agreed to by all his colleagues, and they would endeavour to reduce the Navy Estimates as far as they possibly could.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 273; Noes, 73. (Division List, No. 36)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus HenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. SirH
Austin, Sir John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn Sir Mich. Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Caldwell James
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dobbie, Joseph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers'
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)

Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Horniman, Frederick John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton,John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton. Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M.W. (Stalybridge
Ridley, S.Forde(Bethnal Green
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isleof Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, Harold John
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col.Sir C.E.H(Sheff'd
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk,Mid.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.)Bath
Woodhouse,Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland. John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Cameron, Robert
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan J
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.

M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.

*MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the object he had in view in calling attention to the Brussels Sugar Convention should be kindly received by the Government, for members of the Administration had accepted it as a kind of working model of the new fiscal arrangements. He might begin by explaining what the Permanent Commission was, and in what relation it stood to the Sugar Convention. The Convention was not like many treaties, a simple obligation entered into with a clear appreciation of what it involved, and which, so long as its provisions were observed, caused no further trouble to any of the parties. This Convention set up a body called a Permanent Commission, both legislative and administrative in its character, and invested with very great powers. The duties of the Commission were, first to acquire information with regard to sugar legislation, the duties and bounties that existed in every country in the world, and it was empowered to pronounce an opinion on the practice of all countries. It therefore had a very wide field of operations. More than that, it worked in secret, and the only thing that was absolutely known with certainty was the decisions at which it arrived. It had condemned the practice of Austro-Hungary with regard to sugar—although they had never heard what had become of that condemnation. It had found fault with France, and had absolutely condemned Russia, Denmark, and The Argentine, and it had ordered our Government to prohibit imports from those countries, which it had done. They were at a loss to know why the Government did not also prohibit imports from Japan and the United States and other countries which appeared to have been equally condemned. They knew nothing of what occurred at the October meeting, and thus they had a very mysterious body, with very autocratic powers, which had been exercised with very bad results on the commerce of this country. The Commission might have fulfilled a very useful function had it given full information with regard to the sugar bounties, It might also have proved of great service to the traders of the country, who, he held, had a right to complain of the secrecy observed. The noble Lord the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs told him the other day that it was not proposed at present to publish what had taken place at the October meeting. That was greatly to be deplored. The Commission, after all, was appointed to deal simply with a matter of trade. It was supposed to act fairly between the eight great nations which sent representatives to it, but this secrecy had created grave suspicions with regard to its proceedings. It was rumoured that instead of carrying out its duties as an international Commission, it had become a sort of cartel or trust, controlled entirely by the sugar producers of the Continent.

Let them consider for a moment what it was that the Commission was appointed to do, and what it had done up to the present. Its main work was, of course, to abolish sugar bounties. For twenty-five years there had been an agitation in this country against these bounties. Although they were told that the bounties constituted a powerful instrument for cheapening the price of sugar yet it was urged that they were objectionable. But they had never had any perfect information as to what the bounties really were. The Board of Trade had never been able to tell them accurately. In the year 1889, the late Baron Henry de Worms, who was a consistent opponent of the system, prepared a convention something like the present one, but the negotiations fell through owing to the suggestion to substitute a surtax for the bounties. But our Government had since accepted the principle and on the 1st September last those bounties were abolished. What had been the effect on this country of the abolition of the bounties? It had been exactly what he warned the House it would be. The Government had agreed to substitute a surtax system, for which we were directly responsible and which did great injury to the country, for the system of bounties, for which we were not responsible and which did us no harm, even if it did not do us a great deal of good. The immediate result had been great benefit to the sugar-producing Powers and great injury to this country. The sugar-producing countries benefited because prices there at once began to fall and the consumption to increase. It was, of course, very difficult to get exact figures after only six months experience, but he believed that in France the increased consumption had been something like 60 per cent.; while it was said the retail price had fallen from 6d. to 3½d. per lb., in Germany the increase in consumption had been something like 40 per cent., and in Austria from 30 to 25 per cent. The Board of Trade had informed him that, although figures were not forthcoming, the consumption of sugar on the Continent had greatly increased while the price had fallen considerably.

But let them turn to the condition of affairs in their own country. A pamphlet had been circulated to hon. Members which gave the facts as the effect on the price of sugar here. Commencing with the year 1902, when the Convention first began to affect prices they found that the average price of 88 per cent. beet sugar f.o.b. at Hamburg was 6s. and had risen to 8s. 4d. in December, 1903, a rise of 38 per cent. in the wholesale price, which was of course immediately reflected in the retail trade. The result so far as consumers were concerned was an immediate decrease in consumption in 1901, the consumption was returned at 1·7 million tons, in 1902 it was 1·6, and in 1903 it had fallen to 1·3, or a fall of something like 26 per cent. That was a very serious fall. This was an article of which the consumption, prior to the Convention, was steadily increasing. Now a change had taken place and there was a tendency in an exactly opposite direction. This Motion declared that grave injury had been inflicted on manufacturers of sugared products. This was a matter of which the House had had cognisance for a considerable time, for on the 24th November, 1902, when the Convention was confirmed, the Secretary to the Board of Trade in one of his speeches declared that one benefit the sugar manufacturers of this country would derive from the Convention was, that they would participate in the limitation on the surtax, which was embodied in Clause 3 of the Convention, which would prevent any foreign Power who was a party to the Convention from charging an additional tax of more than 2s. 6d. per cwt. on any of our manufactures that went into their country. On the 2nd December following, the President of the Board of Trade, in answer to a Question, assured the House that the full benefits of the limitation of the surtax would be secured to English manufacturers. That statement was repeated over and over again in the course of the debates, and the Government consequently succeeded in pushing the Bill through without alteration. But the Permanent Commission had decided the question, and now they had had a curt letter from the Board of Trade stating that the decision was that the limitation of the surtax did not apply to sugared goods, and a severe blow had been inflicted on the industries of this country. I was pointed out in the debates last year that an extraordinary development had taken place in the export trade of sugared goods which constituted one of the most satisfactory features in the growth of British commerce in recent years. Owing to the cheapness of the raw material we have been able to make artistic and expensive goods and sell them back to the country from which we obtained the sugar. These exports had been growing year after year, but immediately after the Convention was passed a reduction set in, and now confectionery and preserves showed a falling off of £44,000, biscuits and cakes £8,000, pickles and condiments £9,500, and condensed milk sweetened £61,000. In the item of refined sugars and candies there was a decline of £30,000 in our exports to the Continent. The figures might seem small to some, but then they must remember that the Convention had only been in full operation for four months.

They had heard a good deal of dumping — it was in fact in connection with the sugar question that the word first found currency in the House and the country. It was claimed that the Convention would stop dumping, but it had had an exactly opposite effect. The imports of prepared or manufactured chocolate had increased by £142,000, and of confectionery by £147,000. On the other hand, there had been a falling off in the import of raw cocoa amounting to £300,000. These figures were very significant, and showed what a blow had been inflicted on our industries. The result, so far as our manufacturers were concerned, was this. When they could import sugar from any country they were ready to fight the foreigner with free hands, but now their hands were tied behind their backs; and so we saw the import into this country of all those products, while we could not get admission into the foreign markets. Nor were the sugar refiners any better off under the new circumstances than they were before. The imports of raw sugar had declined by 500,000 cwts., although the price had increased by £500,000, and the imports of refined sugar had increased. But the class that was to be benefited most by the Sugar Convention was the planters of the West Indies; and what was the effect upon them? The effect appeared to be that we had struck the last blow at their waning industry. The export of sugar from the Islands last year, when the Convention came into operation, fell off nearly one half. The total imports in thousands of cwts. during the last three years were 929, 1,280, and 672, so that there appeared to be a great falling off in the import of sugar from the Islands. Several causes had been at work to produce this result. Cuba had come into the market again, and had sent vast supplies not only to the United States but also to this country. By this means the preferential treatment West Indian planters received in the United States had been seriously interfered with. The position of the planters was very well summed up in Mr. Czarnikow's circular of December 31st—

> "Our West Indian planters are hardly better off than during the worst days of the bounty period, when beet was at 6s. 1½d. f.o.b. Hamburg, West Indian sugars sold at to-day's quotations."

Thus the rise in the price of beet sugar had quite failed to improve the market for cane. The truth was there was only a limited outlet in this country for the produce of the Islands, and the beet sugar producers knew how to maintain the advantageous position they had secured. In an Answer given to the hon. Member for Dundee on Wednesday last the Colonial Secretary pointed out that an improvement had taken place in the exports from the Islands to this country for the month of January, but he added he had not, and was not likely for some time to come, to have any official information showing any definite improvement in the condition of the West Indian sugar planters resulting from the Convention. That was the net result of this violent interference with free trade. The mistake this House made was in inventing the wrong cure for the case of the West Indies. In estimating the difficulties which the Convention had imposed on the country it was necessary to take a somewhat wider view. The Government having adopted the alternative of prohibition of import instead of countervailing duties, serious difficulties had arisen in our commercial intercourse with friendly nations. Immediately the Act was passed into law, importation from Russia, Denmark and the Argentine

Republic was prohibited. When the Government took this step it was of opinion that little or no sugar came to this country from Russia; but it had since been discovered that we had very large indirect imports from that country through the Baltic ports, altogether amounting in 1902 to something like 100,000 tons.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): On what authority does the hon. Member say that?

*MR. LOUGH: I have made careful inquiry.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not the case.

*MR. LOUGH said these imports came through the Baltic Ports, and not from Russia direct. The right hon. Gentleman had never before denied it.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It was never said before.

*MR. LOUGH said the fact remained that it was the case. This trade was interfered with. Russia did not take it lying down, and she immediately put a retaliatory duty upon tea. We sent just twenty-seven millions pounds of tea to Russia through the same indirect channels that Russian sugar came to us, and the curious fact was that the quantity of tea she took from us balanced the sugar we took from her. What better system could obtain than for us to take Russia's sugar while she took our tea?

It might be said that prohibition did our exports no harm. But any violent interference with the course of imports was certain to be reflected in the exports. Members of the Government had lately displayed an extraordinary change of attitude with regard to this Convention. In another place a distinguished member of the Government had recently stated that he was an out-and-out opponent of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but that he was a supporter of the Sugar Convention, and that that was a model of the policy of retaliation of which he approved. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol preached the same story at Manchester, where he was speaking against the Birmingham policy. Other Gentlemen opposite also had claimed this Convention as the expression of the policy of the Government with regard to retaliation. What nonsense it was! Who invented the Brussels Sugar Convention? Whose genius pushed the Bill through the House? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The idea at the root of the Convention was colonial preference. The scheme had failed in its object, and it was the most perfect illustration of the right hon. Gentleman's policy that could be found. When the Government declared that they were against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but that they were in favour of the Sugar Convention, they were really playing with the House, as more complete allegiance to the Birmingham policy could not be shown. But he would be asked what practical suggestions could be made? It might be said that we were tied to the Convention for five years, and that therefore nothing could be done. He contended that a great deal could be done. His complaint against the Government was that we were not well represented on the Commission. Our present representative was Sir H. Bergne, a well-known protectionist. But we were a free-trade country, and we ought to be represented by someone who would make a fight for that which the Government declared still to be the policy of the nation. Sir H. Bergne was assisted by Mr. Martineau, the representative of the sugar refiners. Why was not some representative of those great sugar industries which were suffering so much, sent to fight our battle at Brussels? The gentlemen at present there appeared to take every blow against this country lying down. Instead of fighting for the country they seemed to be fighting on the side of those shrewd sugar producers who were simply endeavouring to raise the price of sugar and to destroy our manufactures. Under the Convention there was power to appeal within eight days of any decision. Was an appeal lodged by Sir H. Bergne against the decision on the question of the surtax? Another thing the Government could do was to give up once for all the bad policy of secrecy which had distinguished the conduct of the proceedings of this Commission. Let them publish the proceedings, as they were at liberty to do, so that the country could know what was going on. Then, too, the Government ought to adopt a fighting policy instead of the complaisant course hitherto followed, and when the Commission suggested the condemnation of a country like Russia, with which we had commercial interests, the decision should be fought against.

The effects of the Convention, briefly summarised, appeared to be these: It had caused a rise in the price and a decline in the consumption of sugar in the United Kingdom, at the same time that there was a decline in the price and an increase in the consumption of sugar in other countries which were parties to the Convention. It had brought about an increase in foreign dumping and a decrease of British dumping. It had shut out from British markets important sugar supplies. It had produced a decline in imports from the West Indies to this country. It had raised new tariffs against British grown tea. It had obstructed the general import trade. It had caused the adoption of certificates of origin and the bonding of factories. Finally, it had led to a great dislocation of industry and a great decrease in employment. Those were serious matters. Possibly he had not made good all those points, but he was in difficulties, as he was the party making the attack. What the Government had to do was to show the benefits we had received, and that would be a difficult task. Had any advantage whatever arisen to the country from the Convention? He appealed from the Government to the Gentlemen who sat behind them. They could not be ignorant of the sense of wrong with regard to all these matters which was spreading out of doors. He appealed to those higher traditions of the House of Commons, which rose above Party loyalty, and asked Gentlemen opposite to force the Government not to continue to carry on by those secret methods what was nothing less than a total revolution in our free-trade traditions without obtaining an expression of opinion on one side or the other from the electors of the country.

*MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) in seconding the Motion, remarked on the great similarity between the arguments by which this Convention was commended to the House, and those which had since been used in connection with another policy. In both cases the appeal was based on the alleged ruin of industries at home, the Empire in danger abroad, and the evils of foreign dumping. He desired to point out the effect of the Convention on the industries in whose interests the Government were supposed to have moved. The West Indies were the trump card of the Government. They had urged that the case was so grave and urgent that the only way in which the prosperity of the West Indies could be restored was by the abolition of bounties, that unless their export trade was improved both in volume and value it would be impossible to carry on civilised government, that they would be face to face with ruin, and that starvation would ensue. The opponents of the Convention argued, on the other hand, that the causes of the decline of West Indian trade were economical, and did not arise from the bounty system; they pointed out that the causes of the trouble were out-of-date methods, obsolete machinery, and heavy charges on the land, and that the price of sugar which to the West Indies spelt ruin enabled other sugar-producing countries to carry on a satisfactory industry. Bounties had disappeared, and it was now possible to see what effect the abolition had had on the volume and the prices of the sugar coming from the West Indies. Prior to the Convention, West Indian sugar had always been able to obtain in the Mincing Lane market £1 or £2 per ton more than beet sugar. Within the last twelve years West Indian sugar had been as high as £20 per ton, and within the last twenty years it had been as high as £30. But during the whole of that period there had been constant clamourings that the Islands were being ruined, and that bounties were the cause of their downfall. Consequently those who had followed these matters closely had always had their doubts as to the genuineness of the agitation, for agitation it undoubtedly was. Up to a certain time, as he had said, West Indian sugar obtained a higher price than the corresponding article in beet. What was the position now? In July, 1902, 88 per cent. beet was 6s. 1½d. per cwt.; the corresponding quality of West Indian sugar was 7d. 9d., an advantage of 25 per cent. in price. Instead of bringing about an increase of price the abolition of bounties had had the contrary effect, for to-day the corresponding prices were 7s. 3d. for beet and 8s. for West Indian sugar, so that the latter was 35 per. cent. worse off as compared with two years ago.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR asked whether the hon. Member contended that the Convention had produced that result.

*Mr. KEARLEY said that that was his contention. What had been the effect on the volume? In 1901 the importation of sugar from the West Indies was 46,000 tons; in 1902, 64,000 tons; and in 1903, 33,000 tons, or a drop of nearly 50 per cent. Did that look as though the West Indies were in a fair way of being saved? It would be interesting to hear the right hon. Gentleman's explanation of those figures. Then as to the general position of the West Indies. Before the abolition of bounties the West Indies had preferential access to the markets of the United States. The reason of that was, that in 1897 the United States decided to countervail all sugar from bounty-fed countries. The West Indies were not a bounty-giving country; consequently their sugar went in free of any countervailing duty, whereas sugar from the Continent was countervailed to the extent of 15d. or 18d. per cwt. To-day, however, all the sugar-producing countries on the Continent that were in the Convention had access on the best terms to the United States market, and the preference to the West Indies had disappeared.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR asked what that had to do with the Convention.

*Mr. KEARLEY said it had very much to do with it. The Convention had worsened the position of the West Indies in the United States market. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that

Mr. Kearley.

before the Convention the West Indies had a preferential access to the United States market as compared with European countries. He knew that the United States had entered into a reciprocity treaty with Cuba giving a preference of 20 per cent. But Cuba was not supplying the whole of the requirements of the United States, and the fact remained that the position of the West Indies in competing with European countries for the United States market, was worsened.

He now came to the question of how the Convention had affected the sugar-using industries of this country. They had lost the advantage of cheap sugar. Before the Convention they bought in a free market; the whole world was their market; the representatives of all the cane and beet producing countries in the world were on our market, and there was no question of priority to one or another. That was the system of free trade which they desired to see continued. Was there freedom of trade in the transaction of one's own business to-day? Not at all. The control of the destinies of the sugar-using industries now was not in London, Silvertown, or Dundee; it was at Brussels, and it was eight to one against the interests of the British manufacturers, who, thanks to the Government, were unrepresented there. The Confectioners' Alliance, when they saw the names of the expert advisers nominated on behalf of the Government, asked that they also might be represented by an expert adviser, but the Government would have none of it; they preferred the services of Messrs. Martineau and Lubbock. Everybody knew what the interests of those gentlemen were, and it did seem hard that these other trades should not have been allowed to give the representatives of the Government the benefit of their experience in their own trades. The Convention had made sugar dearer at home and cheaper abroad. What had been its effect on the home market? Before the Convention, owing to enormous visible supplies of sugar, prices were very low. That condition had not changed, because there were still enormous visible supplies of sugar, and he did not hesitate to say that but for the Convention sugar would have been 1s. or 1s. 6d. cheaper to-day. In July, 1902, beet sugar was worth 6s. per cwt., but from the moment the Government placed their influence at the back of the Sugar Convention the price had been steadily rising. He contended that the rise was wholly due to the Convention, because the visible supplies of sugar were so large to-day, and had been ever since July, 1902, that only circumstances operating outside the regular way, could account for the increase of price, which now amounted to something like 35 or 40 per cent.

Another result of the Convention had been to transfer the boon of cheap sugar to the Continent at our expense. The consumption in Germany had increased by 39 per cent., in France by 63 per cent., in Austria by 25 per cent., and in Holland by 43 per cent. Instead of the British consumer securing a corresponding advantage, he had been the victim of the whole situation. As the result of dear sugar at home and cheap sugar abroad, coupled with the broken pledges of the Government, our home market was being invaded by manufactured goods which previously never had access to it, and our exports to markets over which for years we had had unchallenged supremacy were diminishing. In speaking of the broken pledges of the Government, he referred to the statement in which they declared that the conditions laid down by the Convention would be applicable to sugared goods, as well as sugar, by which declaration many Members on the other side of the House were induced to support the measure. He remembered the hon. Baronet the Member for Norwich making a strong speech at the time his Amendment, in which he sought to insert an express declaration in the Bill to that effect, was before the House, and the hon. Baronet was followed by the hon. Member for York. Both stated that they were satisfied with the pledge the Government had given that sugared goods would be assimilated to sugar and be entitled to the same treatment. What was the position to-day? Although in moving the Amendment he had pointed out the danger of unfair treatment being meted out to our exports, and the danger of dumping on our markets, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade said that there was no chance of that; that our manufacturers would get the advantage of the protection of the surtax, and the same privileges in approaching foreign markets with sugared goods, as they would with sugar. The President of the Board of Trade emphasised this more strongly. On 5th August, 1903, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The hon. Member opposite was absolutely wrong in saying that confectioners would be worsened rather than improved by the provisions of the Convention with respect to the surtax. The surtax would reduce any possible advantage the home producer might have over the foreign producer to a maximum of six francs. The result of that would be that our sugar products would find a freer entry into the contracting States."

Were they finding a freer entry into the protective States? Was that the experience of the Government? He did not think it was. The right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "Certainly the import of the articles into the contracting States would not be rendered more difficult. He granted that it was conceivable that danger might arise such as the right hon. Gentleman for Norwich laid great stress on, and that we might find in future our confectionery and jam manufactures, and so forth, exposed to unfair competition."

The suggestion was that the unfair competition might arise from the fact that bounty-fed sugar might be made into sugared goods, and that these would be sent into our market. The right hon. Gentleman then gave an undertaking that that would not be permitted, that if an instance of it was brought to the notice of the Government, steps would be taken to prevent injury to the trades concerned. When we had more experience of the working of the Convention, it would be found, he maintained, that the foreign manufacturers were dumping their sugar products down into our markets to the detriment of the home manufacturers. The Prime Minister the next day said this—

> "The statement that the Government were prepared to admit chocolates and other manufactures into which sugar entered, which manufactures might be made out of bounty-fed sugar, was based on an entire misconception. The Government objected equally to bounty-fed sugar and bounty-fed chocolates, and the only reason why they did not accept the Amendment"

which he had himself moved—

> "which was discussed at great length yesterday, was, in the first place, because they did not believe, as a matter of fact, that there would be

any chocolates, or similar products thrown into this country made of bounty-fed sugar. They did not believe, from the best advice they could obtain, that there was the smallest probability, or possibility of that result. They laid down, in the second place, that if this result occurred, it would be the first and most immediate duty of the Government of this country to stop it by legislation; and, in the third place, the only proper way to stop it was by legislation *ad hoc*, because if the legislation was to be embodied in this Bill the manufacturers of chocolate, and others in this country would be compelled to carry on their manufactures under the control of the Brussels Convention."

If the Government had accepted his Amendment it would have prevented all this difficulty, for although the foreign manufacturers were carrying on their manufactures now under the cloak of the Brussels Convention, unless the Government took very speedy steps to give that protection which our home manufacturers needed, their last stage would be worse than the first. The fact was that the Convention was being evaded on the Continent, where they were using what was practically bound-fed sugar; and sugared products were being dumped upon our markets to the detriment of the home manufacturers. But no legislation had been introduced, or even promised, by the Government in order to put a stop to this evasion of the Convention. When Mr. Boyd, an important man in the sugar industry, complained to the Government that although the Government had given them to understand in regard to sugared goods that they were to get the benefit of the Convention, it had been vitiated by the action of the Brussels Commission, their only reply was—

> "The Brussels Commission has decided that the limitations laid down in Article 3 of the Convention do not apply to sugared products."

Article 7 of the Convention gave our representative the right of appeal when a decision was given adverse to the interests of this country, providing that right was exercised within eight days. Would the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade tell them whether our representative had exercised that right on any occasion when the interests of British sugar refiners or the sugar-using manufacturers had been invaded? He believed that no notice of appeal had been given on any single occasion; and, if that were so, it afforded ample justification of the claim which was made by the sugar-using industries to have a representative on the Commission to advise the Goverment as to the course to be taken. Their application for such a representative was ignored, however, and they were now smarting from the ill effects that had arisen in consequence.

What sort of treatment was being meted out to our manufacturers in foreign markets? The Secretary to the Board of Trade had told them, as a sort of consolation, that although they would pay more for their sugar, they would stand in a better position in foreign markets because their sugared goods would be admitted on equal terms with sugar. Well, at the present moment some of these countries were imposing a duty of 20s. per cwt., which was much more than 100 per cent., on some of the sugared goods entering those countries. Before the Convention Act was passed they had nothing of that kind to contend with. Sugar entering into Germany from this country was charged a duty of 8s. 5d. per cwt., and sugared goods 30s. 6d. per cwt. In Austria the duty on sugar was 11s. per cwt., and on sugared goods 35s. 6d. per cwt. Did the hon. Gentleman wonder that the sugar-using trades charged the Government with a great breach of faith. They were only told that their appeals were receiving careful consideration, that they were to possess their souls in patience, and that the matter would be brought before the Commission in March. Even the sugar refiner, the spoiled child of the Government, had his grievance, and was up in arms against the way in which he was being treated. Mr. Martin, honorary Secretary to the British Sugar Refineries, addressed a letter to Lord Lansdowne, dated 20th January last, in which he drew attention to the duties in Belgium, Germany and Austria on imported syrup. Mr. Martin said—

> "It appears that since 1st September the import duty on syrup containing over 50 per cent. sweetening matter has been 25.50 francs, which is tantamount to the charge on refined sugar. By the new Belgian law, 14th December, 1903, the Excise duty on sugar used in the manufacture of invert sugar, has been considerably reduced, but no reduction has been made in the import duty, so that the invert sugar manufacturers in Belgium are enabled to raise their price for home consumption to the amount

of the surtax and therefore obtain a considerable bounty on their production."

and then he went on—

> "Apparently the Belgian Government were treating invert sugar and golden syrup as by-products, and consider themselves free from the conditions of the Convention with regard to these two articles. My Association contends st ongly that these articles are formed of sugar, and are not by-products, and that the terms of the Convention should apply to both of them. If this is not insisted upon, not only will a large and growing export trade to Belgium in syrup, and possibly in invert, sugar, be entirely killed, but it may, and probably will, come about that our own home and export markets will be invaded by bounty-fed invert sugar and syrup to the detriment of many of our refiners. Any Belgian refiner who makes invert sugar would be enabled to apply some of the benefits he obtained from the latter to cheapen his refined sugar."

Thus all the interests the Government were supposed to protect by the Sugar Convention Act were showing that this Sugar Convention had absolutely failed in its purpose.

He wished to say a word in behalf of an interest that had not much consideration given to it in this House—the interest of the consumer. He had been very much struck in the fiscal debates with the fact that, although there was a great amount of argument all round the question on behalf of the producer, very few Members spoke on behalf of the consumer, who bore the burden of all our sins and follies. In spite of the belief of some of the hon. Members opposite to the contrary, whatever increase there might be in a cost of an article, it finally worked its way down to the consumer. He maintained that the Convention alone had advanced the price of sugar by a ¼d. a pound; the duty was a ½d., so that the consumer paid ¾d. a pound more for his sugar than he did before. He used to buy his sugar at 1¼d. a pound, now he pays 2d. The result was that the consumption had fallen, and that was not difficult to understand, when the methods of the consumer were considered. He estimated with the greatest precision and nicety his weekly budget, and if the price of a commodity advanced he could spend only the same amount of money so must satisfy himself with less of the commodity which had advanced in price. He thought that enough had been said to show that the consumer, that trade, and manufacturers had suffered equally, and that the interests in whose behalf the Government were impelled to move had not benefited in one single degree from the Convention.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the decisions of the Permanent Commission of the Brussels Sugar Convention have operated so as to inflict grave injury on the manufacturers of sugared products in the United Kingdom as compared with their Foreign rivals, and that the Convention has failed to confer the anticipated benefits on the West Indies."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said that the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, however little he intended it, was evidently in favour of the introduction of the principle of retaliation. The result of the speeches of the mover and seconder was that they would, if they could, destroy the Convention and restore the bounty system. Their speeches had been elaborated with considerable length of detail and a great deal of inaccuracy. One conspicuous inaccuracy of the hon. Member for Islington was his statement that the Sugar Convention was the special policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and was designed to give a preference to the Colonies. Now, as a matter of fact, the Sugar Convention expressly prohibited any preferences being given to the Colonies. He would like to remind the House that, as a result of a bounty system, which hon. Gentlemen opposite wished to see restored, sugar refining had largely disappeared from Liverpool. There were still five considerable refineries in that city, but within his own recollection there were three times that number. The same result followed in Greenock. He would remind the House also that Mr. Gladstone had denounced the bounty system with all his eloquence on many occasions; but he wished to do away with it by agreement, by negotiation, in other words, by convention. He must confess he had never given his confidence to this Convention, because it was the work of free-trade statesmen and agitators. His objection to it was that it was a clumsy free-trade device for restoring the natural price of sugar, and for affecting that which, from his point of view, would have been better attained by frankly protectionist means. He had not the slightest hesitation in saying that the right thing to do was to put a large duty on bounty-fed sugar, and give a preference to colonial sugar. He recognised however, that, having regard to the free-trade views which prevailed in the House and the country, that was impossible, and the Convention was the only practicable measure. He believed that it had done a great amount of good, and that it would do a good deal more. He asked the House, was there any industry in the country which ought to depend upon the dishonest bounty system? They all knew that that system was intended to ruin the sugar refining industry in this country. It appeared to him that the arguments used by hon. Gentlemen opposite amounted to this, that they wished their profits should be increased.

Mr. LOUGH said he had not the slightest interest, direct or indirect, in sugar, and he considered the remark of the hon. Member very unjust.

Mr. DAVID MACIVER said he withdrew the remark at once. What he wished to say was that if there were any hon. Members in the House who were personally interested, they might use the same arguments as those employed by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Even in his own case, he suffered largely from the Convention, because he used to carry in his steamers a large amount of bounty-fed sugars. Notwithstanding that, he gave his hearty and cordial support to the Government, and he did not think that the confectioners had any justification for their present agitation.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) said that the hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded the Resolution had made out a case, and he would try and cast his remarks in a mould rather more favourable to the position of the Government than he might otherwise have done. He did not believe that, on the whole, it was true to say that the Convention had altogether failed in its objects. After all, the primary object of the Convention was to effect an improvement in prices. He confessed that he doubted at the time whether that improvement would be so rapidly effected. There were many causes which might have retarded any rise in prices; but the Government had succeeded much better than, in the view of many people, could have been expected. The hon. Gentleman opposite had been able to show how prices had steadily advanced; how there had been a rise of over £2 per ton since the Convention was enforced. The monthly returns of the prices of sugar f.o.b. at Hamburg showed a steady and constant rise; and naturally that had made itself felt in retail prices. The same class of sugar which was sold at 12s. 6d. per cwt. before the Convention, now fetched 15s. 3d. in the London markets. Naturally and necessarily that had had an effect on the retail prices of ordinary sugar purchased by the consumer. He believed the price in all cases had advanced a ¼d. per lb. in consequence of the Convention. There had already been a considerable measure of success for the Government. But the Government also held out hopes that there would be no fluctuations, or fewer fluctuations, after the passage of the Convention. He had never himself been able to see how the abolition of bounties, which was almost the only fixed factor in the price, should be regarded as making for greater stability of price. One would have thought when there were so many factors affecting the price—combinations, freights, new processes, new areas of production, and above all, variations of the harvest—that these elements would be more responsible for the fluctuations of the price of sugar than the fixed bounties given by foreign Governments, but the fact remained that our Government had certainly succeeded in limiting the fluctuations in one direction, at any rate. The downward fluctuation had ceased altogether, and the manufacturer and the consumer had now only to adapt themselves to fluctuations in the direction of a steady and constant rise since the Convention. Most undoubtedly that must be counted as a partial triumph for the efforts of the Government.

He asked himself whether it was altogether fair to say that these results on the price of sugar were due to the action of the Government or to the Convention. Could these results be really claimed as arising from the Convention? What other reason could be assigned? The natural circumstances of the world did not seem to provide any explanation of it, and he thought that the Government was entitled to the whole credit, undivided and unstinted, of any alteration in the price of sugar. His hon. friend the Member for Islington felt conscious of the fact that it might be argued against him that it was, perhaps, a little too soon to judge of the results of the Convention. That was an admission which gave great satisfaction to his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade. He quite agreed, for there were many indications which went to show that the rise in the price of sugar was by no means complete. After all, the Convention had only been influencing the market since 5th March, 1902, and it had only been actually in force since 1st September. In the circumstances, however, he thought that the very marked and substantial stiffening in price which had been already achieved ought to be extremely gratifying to those who sat on the Treasury Bench and to one who no longer sat there. It ought to be especially gratifying to the First Lord of the Treasury, because the Convention was the first example of his own new policy—the first example of the employment of retaliatory powers.

A great many people had been saying in the autumn—he might have been among them—that the policy of retaliation was an afterthought designed to tide over the exigencies of the Party situation; but the first fruits of the Convention proved beyond all doubt that retaliation was a real policy, and that its use in the hands of Imperial statesmen not hampered by the old traditions of British finance or the pedantry of economics or arithmetic, might produce results which sensibly affected the industries of the people and the comfort of the working classes. He thought also it was a great proof, if what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham told them was true, of the commercial strength and prestige of Britain. Let them consider the picture the right hon. Gentleman submitted to the country. Here were all these great protectionist nations—the followers of a policy of scientific taxation. We were often told that they were not all fools; they were pursuing their self-interest, and in doing so they had for a long course of years adopted a two-fold policy—they had stimulated their home industries by means of bounties, and had pursued a relentless policy of dumping in the British market. Why did they dump? The late Colonial Secretary said it was very clear that they dumped because they wished a monopoly, and that they nearly got it, but at the critical moment, in the nick of time, the President of the Board of Trade stretched out his hand, and a voice from Downing Street went out and stopped those nations in the flood-tide of victory. The moment the British Government intervened, so they were invited to believe, the whole fabric of continental protection, in so far as sugar was concerned, collapsed, and continental nations, rather than face the fury of the right hon. Gentleman, proceeded, not merely to throw over their system of bounties, not merely to starve their home producers who had grown up under this munificent system, but to abandon the monopoly of the English market which, according to the late Colonial Secretary, they had almost within their grasp. They not only submitted to our dictation, but they submitted with an uncommonly good grace. So perfect were the manners of foreign diplomatists and so correct their conduct, that one could almost imagine that they thought that they were the parties getting the benefit of the Convention and that we were the parties going to lose. But there was a more remarkable test of our power in the composition of the tribunal. Ten or twelve Powers were represented, and we had only one delegate. We were one against twelve. Austria-Hungary had secured two representatives—one for Austria, and one for Hungary. One might almost have thought that a claim might have been lodged on behalf of Great Britain and Ireland, but we did not need to worry about that. Our position was so strong that one Englishman representing a country of our commercial strength was able to stand up against all those foreigners. One representative of a free-trade nation was sufficiently strong to preserve the interest of this country against so many protectionists, and to force those nations to carry out in detail conditions of the Convention which must be galling and humiliating, and which inflicted such loss on all of them. He could not repress a thrill of patriotic emotion when he contemplated the spectacle of this solitary champion of Britain fighting alone for free and freer trade against the world, and preserving, by his own individual authority and the moral force of the Government he represented, against overwhelming odds, the interest of the tea planters of Jamaica and the sugar refiners by the banks of the Clyde.

He thought the President of the Board of Trade would admit that he had dwelt only on those aspects of the Government policy which might be the subject of legitimate congratulation. Before sitting down he wished to say one or two words on the reverse of the medal. Very many of the valuable objects which the Government had in view had not been obtained without some cost. The price of sugar had gone up by £2 a ton, and one had only to calculate how many tons came into the country to estimate the loss arising from that fact alone. He would put aside altogether the question of the consumer, because it had been very well dealt with by the hon. Member for Devonport. So far as the producer was concerned, he had never been able to make out why it should be honourable, patriotic, and Imperial to refine sugar, and contemptible, unworthy, and pro-Boer to be engaged in jam and pickles. He should have thought that in a commercial country any change in legitimate trade, if employment was considerable and conditions healthy and wages rising, was worthy of the respectful attention of the statesmen directing its affairs. And it had been proved that fifteen times as many persons were employed in this despised and degrading industry as in the patriotic business of sugar-refining. It had been proved that more than five times the number of persons displaced by foreign competition or other causes from sugar refining had been accommodated in the secondary industries of sugar. Jam and pickles had to fight foreign competition like everybody else, and they had been fighting it rather well. There was scarcely any branch of our export trade which had undergone such a notable expansion as the jam trade group. The Government had done a great injury to all these important trades. They had done an injury both direct and indirect. At the same time that they had raised the price of the raw material here the Convention had depressed the price of raw material abroad. It was not merely addition; it was addition and subtraction. It was like votes sometimes given by Members against their Party, which counted two upon a division. This double operation had produced striking effects. The consumption of sugar here had fallen off immediately, whereas, up to 1901, we were increasing our consumption at the rate of 40,000 tons a year. In the two years influenced by the Convention and the negotiations, the consumption in this country had fallen off by 200,000 tons each year. While that had been done here, French and German consumption of sugar had increased by 122,000 tons. In fact it might be said, speaking in general, that the consumption of sugar by continental Powers had gone up between a quarter and a half as much again during the period covered by the Convention. If he were willing to embark on a line of argument which might be gratifying to the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division, whose strong protectionist views were well known to the House, he would point out that the effect of this increased consumption abroad and the decrease here had resulted in an increase in the import of foreign manufactured sugar into this country, and a decrease in the manufactured sugar going from this country to foreign countries.

Some of the inducements held out to the House to support the Convention had not been altogether realised. They were urged to support it because it would make us more independent of the sugar production of the Continent, and make this country more dependent on the sugar production of our own Colonies. The very contrary was the fact, as the debate had already shown. Since the passing of this Convention we had become dependent in a larger proportion, according to the figures, on continental supplies, and in smaller proportion than ever in recent years, on the supply coming from the West Indies. Not only had foreign dumpers controlled the market commercially, but we had provided them with an instrument in this astonishing tribunal which enabled them to control the sugar market from a diplomatic as well as a commercial point of view. We were promised certain advantages under Article III. of the Convention. We were led to believe that under the Convention the duties on British sugar products, imposed by States who were parties to the Convention, would be reduced from the high and almost prohibitive level at which they now stood. The Secretary to the Board of Trade was a Minister closely connected with this class of legislation, and he had earned a reputation for close and cogent reasoning; it was therefore disappointing to find that some of the statements he so confidently made were not borne out by the teachings of experience. But the object to which the Government above all attached importance had not been achieved. The case for joining the Convention was based on the needs of the West Indies, as was apparent from the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury on 26th June, 1902. Naturally the West Indies were brought very prominently before the country by the Association headed by Sir Nevile Lubbock, which was, perhaps, not altogether disinterested, and which operated by a very ingenious method of agitation, that of exciting the honest Imperial enthusiasm of the English people and of turning it to commercial profit. Sir Nevile Lubbock was the individual who made an impression on the Prime Minister, because on 26th June, 1902, the right hon. Gentleman said that—

> "If it were not, in effect, for the case of the West Indies, there was no conceivable reason why we should not allow the foreigner to tax himself for the sake of our consumer."

That was said in the pre-tariff reform epoch. That was before "Economic Notes on Insular Free Trade" was published. His purpose in alluding to that was not to revive that greater controversy, but to show how absolutely the case for our joining the Convention was based upon the need of the West Indies. The facts were patent to the House. It was a very remarkable fact that, while other kinds of sugar had been artificially raised in price, the one class of sugar the Government desired to raise in price, and for which they embarked on this legislation, was the one class in the whole of the sugar market which had not responded to the new conditions. There had, in fact, been a collapse in the West India trade; the importations from thence during the period covered by the Convention had fallen off in value and tonnage. The West Indies were given £250,000 to help them until the Convention came to their relief, but the prospects for the West Indies were as dark as ever they had been, and it was a melancholy comment on the recent policy to find the Colonies now pinning their faith to the fiscal policy of the Member for West Birmingham, and the hope of an arrangement such as that between the United States and Cuba. That right hon. Gentleman had been a Minister of many policies, but this was a policy in which he had had absolutely his own way; it was pressed by him on an indifferent or a reluctant Cabinet, and forced by every measure of arbitrary pressure through a distrustful and even contemptuous House of Commons. The Goverment had put a considerable strain on their faithful followers; no Government ever had followers more faithful, no Government ever gave such opportunities for the display of loyalty. He was bound to say there was something about the vote of this majority that reminded him of the machine-made majorities of the United States rather than the reasoned, independent assent of the House of Commons. The majority that registered its approval of the Army Corps scheme, that registered its approval of Chinese labour, and registered its disapproval of the free-trade Resolution would, no doubt, set its seal of sanction once more on the Sugar Convention. But the story would not end there.

Here was a case where the Member for Birmingham had been able to have his own way, and the results were before the country. What were those results? The price of an essential article of food, a matter of comfort and health, and the raw materials of many industries, by the deliberate intervention of the Government, had been unnecessarily enhanced. It had been put up in England, and it had been put down on the Continent of

Europe. At home the trades which depended on sugar had been depressed while abroad they had been exalted. They were more than ever in the power of the Continental producer, and they had abandoned their right of buying in the markets of the world. A very large proportion of the countries of the world were prohibited from trading with them by this Convention, and they had embroiled themselves in a tariff dispute with Russia. They had set up a complicated and vexatious machinery which they had hoped they had given up for ever. Meanwhile the West Indies were worse off than ever they were before, for they were now in a miserable condition, and they had no guarantee that the House would not be presented with other demands of the kind of which this House had already had sufficient experience. As free-traders they deplored most of all that through the agency of this Convention another turn of the screw had been given to increase the price of food. Lastly, no restrictions had been placed on the supply of manufactured goods from abroad. Perhaps it was a good thing, that in view of the circumstances of a political situation that was known to all, and on the eve of a great departure of policy, they should have provided for the country this object lesson of Ministerial ineptitude. He hoped they should have opportunities to refer to it in this session, or in the next session of this Parliament, or in the next Parliament or in the interval between the two Parliaments; but in the meantime he thought it should be nailed to the parish pump as a warning to tariff meddlers, tariff mongers, and tariff muddlers of all denominations.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member for Oldham has just delivered a humorous speech, and perhaps he will excuse me if I refuse to regard it as a serious contribution to the debate. So far as the hon. Member for Oldham has used any arguments against the Government they are the same arguments as those which have been used by the hon. Member who initiated this debate. It is therefore to the speech of the hon. Member for Islington that I prefer to turn if I am to understand rightly the case that is to be made against the Convention. This Resolution consists of two parts, and it reflects upon the Permanent Commission and upon the British representatives upon that Commission. The substantive Resolution declares that the Convention has failed in its object and—

> "That the decisions of the Permanent Commission of the Brussels Sugar Convention have operated so as to inflict grave injury on the manufacturers of sugared products in the United Kingdom as compared with their foreign rivals,"

I shall refer to the two branches of that Motion later; but I wish to point out that the statement that the proceedings of the Permanent Commission are conducted in secret and that it gives no account of its labours is incorrect. A report has already been presented to the House. As a matter of fact the shorthand notes of the proceedings of the July meeting are to be seen in the Library at this moment. The hon. Member knew perfectly well that no report of the proceedings in October had yet been issued because some of the most important of the subjects discussed have not yet been finally dealt with. The hon. Member, not content with attacking the Permanent Commission, has attacked the British representatives on that Commission. I have always thought that it was a good rule of the House that the agent of the Government should not be attacked, but rather the Government itself. The Government are prepared to accept full responsibility for Sir Henry Bergne's acts. The hon. Member has attacked a statement of mine with respect to the amount of sugar imported from Russia in the year 1902. I have stated that the amount in value is only £2,000, but the hon. Member told the House that it amounted to between £800,000 and £1,000,000. When asked for his authority for that statement the hon. Member said he had been making inquires.

*MR. LOUGH said he had obtained the figures from a book which he held in his hand.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Then the only authority which the hon. Member has is avowedly a partisan pamphlet.

*MR. LOUGH said he had many authorities.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I should like to have those authorities. I will state to the House the results of my own inquiries into this matter. I will take the Russian statement of the exports from Russia in the year 1901, because we have not got the Russian statement for a later date. According to that statement the total amount exported from Russia to all destinations in 1901 was 126,000 tons. Of that total only 700 tons were sent to the United Kindgom. That is the statement given by Russia herself of Russian exports. We have not yet got the detailed figures for the following years, but I can give the amount to Germany and the United Kingdom for 1902. In 1902 the amount sent to the United Kingdom was 1,000 tons. I think that is a fair example of the accuracy which has characterised the statements of the hon. Member for Islington. Then the hon. Member told us that the sugar refiners are not satisfied, and read a letter from Mr. Martin, the Secretary of the Sugar Refiners' Association. It would be strange indeed if nothing could be said against an international instrument of this kind, but I am authorized by Mr. Martin to say that the sugar refiners are satisfied with the working of the Convention.

The hon. Member for Islington raised seven points, and said at the end of his speech that perhaps he had not made good those seven points. That is the only part of the hon. Member's speech with which I heartily agree. I did not think that the hon. Member has made good those seven points, or any one of them. The Resolution states that—

> "The decisions of the Permanent Commission of the Brussels Sugar Convention have operated so as to inflict grave injury on the manufacturers of sugared products in the United Kingdom as compared with their foreign rivals, and that the Convention has failed to confer the anticipated benefits on the West Indies."

Now let me look at these two propositions for a brief period. The first thing I have to observe is that nobody except the hon. Member for Islington and the hon. Member for Oldham could have imagined that, within six months, it would be possible to form a fair estimate of the effect of this Convention. It is said that exports from the West Indies have positively diminished within the last year. The right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, also used this argument to prove the uselessness of the Convention at an earlier period of this session. As a matter of fact examination shows that, while there was a reduction during the period preceding the coming into operation of the Convention, there has been a steady increase of exports since that event. I do not profess to attach much importance to that, but if it is a good argument to say that eight months preceding the Convention there was a reduction; it is an equally good argument to say that after the Convention actually came into operation those imports increased.

*MR. LOUGH said that the comparison he made was for 1901, 1902, and 1903, and the right hon. Gentleman should not accuse the Leader of the Opposition nor anyone else unless he could upset the figures.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: These were the words used by the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, on the first day of the session—

> "In the first place it was hoped that the Sugar Convention would help the West Indies, but the imports have fallen by nearly one half."

It is perfectly true that the imports during the year have fallen, but the imports since the Convention came into effect as compared with the previous years have increased. [AN HON. MEMBER: Do you include January?] No, but by including January the result is more favourable. The hon. Member for Devonport referred to a fall in the price of sugar from the West Indies and I asked him what the Convention had to do with that fall so far as it had occurred. The hon. Member answered my Question by asking me another Question, but I observed that under the cover of that other Question he never answered my Question. I do not think it can be shown that the fall which has occurred has any relation to the Convention whatever. I rather fancy that the hon. Member was referring to the brown West Indian sugar, and it is perfectly true that during the month of February the price of that sugar has fallen to 7s. 3d., but if you go back to 31st December you will find that at that time it commanded a price of

8s. 11½d. The truth is that these temporary fluctuations in the market are often very difficult to explain.

*Mr. KEARLEY said his point was to draw a comparison between the relative values of West Indian sugar as against beet sugar for a certain period, and he pointed out that two years ago it was 26 per cent. higher and it had now fallen considerably below that.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think the hon. Member has made his point very much clearer. It is impossible to draw any just conclusion from the price on a particular day without a careful examination of the surrounding circumstances. The hon. Member for Oldham has referred to matters which have nothing whatever to do with the Convention, as, for example, the arrangements between Cuba and the United States. His Majesty's Government knew perfectly well, when they contemplated the Convention, that some such arrangement as that respecting Cuba was threatened, and that afforded an additional reason for their action. As regards the other arguments used by the hon. Member for Oldham, according to his view, and the view of his hon. friends opposite, a bounty goes entirely to the advantage of the consumer. If that is really so the result of this Convention should be that neither an advantage or a disadvantage will be given and we shall be exactly where we were before. I will leave it to my hon. friend the Member for Oldham to consider, if a countervailing duty goes entirely to the advantage of the consumer, what difference does this make to the West Indies? If this is not so it appears to me that one of the favourite arguments used by the hon. Member for Oldham and his friends entirely breaks down.

The Resolution also declares that the decisions of the Permanent Commission have inflicted grave injury on the manufacturers of sugared products in the United Kingdom. Where is the evidence of this injury? I have listened in vain for any figures to prove it. The hon. Member did quote a partisan pamphlet, to which he appears to attach very much importance, to show that the sugar exports from this country have diminished and that the imports have increased. It is true that the exports fell off in 1903 as compared with 1902 from £846,000 to £802,000; but here, again, it is never safe to take a single year or even a few years. I ask hon. Members to go back to 1901, when it will be found that the exports of sugar goods from this country were £749,000, and therefore since the year 1901 there has been an increase to £802,000. There is surely nothing very alarming in those figures. The hon. Member referred to cocoa and chocolate, and said that there had been a fall in 1901 from £197,000 to £129,000. The figures for 1903 have risen from £129,000 to £141,000. The hon. Member for Oldham said that the Convention had been influencing the sugar world since March, 1902. It is remarkable that while there has been the shadow of this Convention over the sugar market in those years, 1902 and 1903 have shown the lowest average price in the history of the sugar industry. [An Hon. Member: The average price.] Yes, the average price and the lowest price, too. What I say is equally true of refined and unrefined sugar. The average import price of refined sugar in 1902 and 1903 has practically stood at the same figure, being 10s. 7½d. in one case and 10s 8¼d in the other. There has hardly been any rise or fall, but the price is lower than has ever been known before. There has been a rise in price between 1902 and 1903 from 7s. 7½d. to 8s. 0¼d. There has been in the case of refined sugar since September last a rise of something like 10d., but since the end of the year a fall of 3½d., making altogether a rise of price of less than 7d. But here, again, if we wish to realise the significance of the figures we must compare other years, and in 1902 the rise in price between September and December was almost the same as in the year 1903. Taking the monthly average of prices in January, they cannot be said to be alarming. As to actual prices I will make a comparison with the year previous to the time the Convention was made. I take 1901, and in January of that year the price of refined sugar was 12s. 7¼d., whilst in 1904 it was 11s. 1¾d., or less by nearly

1s. 6d. The price of unrefined sugar in January, 1901, was 10s. 3d. and in January, 1904, 8s. 11½d. I think the House will admit that these prices cannot be said to have inflicted much injury. The confectioners are, in fact, crying out before they are hurt. No injury has been shown, or can be shown to have been done to them by the Convention. The complaints refer not to any injury already inflicted, but to a possible and prospective injury arising from the fact that the Permanent Commission has decided, contrary to the opinion of the Government as to the true interpretation of the Convention, that Article 3, which limits the surtax on sugar, does not apply in the case of sugared goods. I admit that it is a great disappointment to find that in this matter the Commission has not taken the view which I still think the correct one, namely, that Article 3 does apply, and that the real meaning of the Convention is that there should be no greater surtax on sugared goods than upon sugar. We do not consider that the question of the surtax is by any means closed. The decision of the Commission leaves Article 1 of the Convention absolutely untouched, and when the Commission meet again, in a week's time, it will be the business of our representative to require a clear statement as to the scope and effect of Article 1, having regard to the decision on Article 3. The subject is still *sub judice* and under discussion, and if the interpretation put by the Commission on Article 1 should render it possible for the contracting States to give what bounty they please on the sugared product itself, apart from the sugar contained in it, a grave situation will arise, necessitating such steps as may be required in order to provide a suitable and adequate remedy.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): It is quite unnecessary for me to say anything upon the general question after the most masterly exposition of the present state of affairs by my two hon. friends behind me, and the brilliant speech of the hon. Member for Oldham. The first part of that speech was the most sustained piece of irony I have ever heard in the House of Commons. My hon. friends have asked in a very pointed manner of the Government what benefit has come to any one from this Convention. Acts of Parliament are passed not for the purpose of avoiding doing mischief to someone, but for the purpose of doing actual benefit to someone. It has been abundantly proved by the speeches of my hon. friends that damage has been done by this policy, but no attempt has been made to show that anyone has gained anything from it. But I wish particularly to direct attention to the position of the House in this matter. My hon. friend the Member for Islington said we might demand a change in our representation on the Commission at Brussels. I doubt whether that would have any effect. The truth is that we are in this position, that it is out of our power to alter the substance or to modify the working of the Convention in any respects. We are tied and bound helplessly. The most we could do would be to suggest to the Government that they should suggest to our representation on the Commission that he should suggest to his eleven colleagues—all of whom represent States which are our competitors and adverse to us in policy—that they should assent to some little modification being made in the working of the Convention. That is the whole extent of the power of the House in the matter. It is an excellent illustration of the way in which fiscal reform and Parliamentary control come into collision. I have looked up the historical pamphlet which caused the break up of the Cabinet and find it asserted there that, as regards our fiscal policy "what is fundamental is that our liberty should be recovered." One feels inclined to say "O liberty, what political crimes are committed in thy name." By this policy you deprive the House of Commons of its freedom of control and the country of its freedom of trade. I think the Sugar Convention is a most useful object lesson at the present juncture of affairs. It shows the worthlessness of the rampart which it was proposed to erect against foreign dumping. The debate will also show the country that this policy of retaliation, or what the retaliators call the resuming of the liberty of negotiation, means a very different thing after the negotiations are concluded; and I trust that when the effects of the Convention are realised by the country its determination will be strengthened to take no step on the path which they have been asked to tread.

MR. WALTER PALMER (Salisbury) said he had listened carefully to the speeches of the hon. Member for Islington, the hon. Membe rfor Devonport, and the hon. Member for Oldham, and not one practical instance dealing with the first part of the Motion had been given by them. It was all very well for the hon. Member for Oldham to come down to this House and make speeches for the amusement of the other side, but this was a very serious question, and it was because he recognised the seriousness of it that he wished to raise his voice against some of the statements made by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and to say that he entirely disagreed with many of their arguments. He stated the grounds of his disagreement last year, and most of the arguments advanced by the hon. Member for Islington were the same as those which were contained in his speech of a year ago at Birmingham. The fact that important trades in this country which were interested, were not represented on the Brussels Convention was a matter which might be more favourably dealt with by the Government. But he entirely disagreed with the junior Member for Oldham, and thought the time had come when retaliation ought to be resorted to by this country. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had not made out their case, particularly in regard to the consumer in this country, who, he thought, would not suffer. He maintained that the Convention had secured us freedom, so that in future we should not be ruled by cartels on the Continent. He believed that thereby the production of cane sugar would gradually be increased.

*MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said it had been stated without contradiction that the real originator and author of this Convention was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham. He should like to read to the House what the ex-Colonial Secretary said nineteen years ago in the year 1885 upon this question—

> "Really the sugar question is about as strong as any we can have. I would as soon fight this fair-trade humbug upon sugar as upon any other thing. I know something about the Workmen's Association for the abolition of the Sugar Bounties—I have met the gentleman before. It is a sham association, with precious few workmen about it. It is got up and paid for by a few West Indian planters who want to make a profit out of an increased price of sugar. Ah! I have great sympathy with any real movement on the part of the working classes, but I have no sympathy at all with those who sell themselves to an agitation of this kind. Well, I have no doubt my constituents will know how to deal with them when they come. The only arguments they have got which is worth a moment's consideration is this: they say that cheap sugar has thrown out of employment a number of decent, industrious working men who were engaged in the refinery trade, and they ask you, the whole population of the country, to submit to an additional charge for your sugar in order that these poor fellows may be set to work again. The claim upon you to submit to a great sacrifice, to raise the price of every cup of tea you drink, of almost every article of consumption —for sugar enters into almost the whole consumption of your household—this claim, made by these eighteen-penny working men, is not made on behalf of the working classes, but it is made in order that the few West Indian planters may double their fortunes rather quicker than they otherwise would do."

It might be said that anyone was at liberty to change his opinions, but facts and principles did not change, and the facts and principles of this question were the same to-day as they were in 1885. It was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham and his friends who had changed, including the Member for the Bordesley Division, who, after a life-long devotion to free trade, had suddenly discovered that he had been worshipping a hollow idol all his life and that our system of free imports was "as dead as Queen Anne." Well may they say, *Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.*

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 162; Noes, 202. (Division List No. 37.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hon. Herbert Henry
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland

Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay(Galway)
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph.
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt EC(S.Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)

Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.

Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F(Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham

Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.)
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thomas Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheff'ld
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF NAVY ESTIMATES 1904-5.

The Estimates for 1904-5 amount to £36,889,000 as opposed to £34,457,000 for the current year. More than half of this increase is accounted for by the fact that it is proposed to pay the whole balance still due on the 1st April in respect of the two recently-purchased battleships, formerly belonging to Chile, and to provide the ammunition for them, during the next financial year.

The rest is due to the expansion of the Fleet, affecting the charge for *matériel* and stores in Votes 8 and 9, and that for the *personnel* especially in Votes 1 and 2 and 7; the increase also to the pay of the Army necessitates a corresponding increase to that of the Royal Marines in Votes 1 and 2; in Vote 10 there is a further large increase for interest and sinking fund in respect of the Naval Works Loan Acts.

The Board of Admiralty are well aware that the charge they are asking Parliament to sanction is a heavy one, but Parliament must remember how heavy is the responsibility cast by it on the Board of providing the country with a Navy strong enough to sustain a struggle with the navies of any two Powers, and also strong enough to ensure reasonable security to its vast sea-borne trade and to the food supply of the people.

The Board ask for nothing which they do not believe to be necessary for this purpose. They have avoided, and will avoid, giving any stimulus to the expansion of armaments by the formulation of large programmes of construction, but when such programmes are adopted by other Powers, they have no choice but to take them into account in framing their own shipbuilding policy.

Administration.

The distribution of work between the members of the Board of Admiralty has been modified with a view to simplification and to the further consolidation under each member of the Board of a definite sphere of work. The Senior Naval Lord remains as hitherto responsible for advice on naval policy, for the distribution and war organisation of the Fleet, and for its general discipline and efficiency; the Second Naval Lord is responsible for the *personnel*, the Controller for the *matériel*, and the Junior Naval Lord for the supply of stores and the organisation of transport; the Civil Lord is responsible for the Works Department; the Financial Secretary is responsible for the finance, and the Secretary for correspondence and the management of the Office.

The staff of the Naval Ordnance Department has been strengthened by the addition of an officer of the Royal Marine Artillery and additional writers.

The staff of the Naval Intelligence Department has been increased by an additional Naval Attaché, of whom there are now six, stationed respectively at Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Rome, Washington, and Tokio; by a Commander and three Lieutenants,* Royal Navy, by an Engineer Commander, Royal Navy, by a Lieutenant-Colonel and Major, Royal Marines, and by four Civil Servants. This Department, the work of which is distributed between four divisions—mobilisation, war, foreign, and trade—is, as I have stated in previous Memoranda, steadily developing.

It must, however, be borne in mind that, whereas map-making is one of the principal functions of a Military Intelligence Department, the very important and responsible work of making and correcting charts for the Navy is in the system of the Admiralty entrusted to a special Department, that of the Hydrographer, and that the work of that officer in all that relates to the preparation of the Navy for war is co-ordinated with that of the Director of Naval Intelligence by the real chief of the Naval Intelligence Department, the Senior Naval Lord himself.

The administrative changes reported in previous years are all working smoothly and well.

APPENDIX I.

Personnel.

Two years ago I recognised my special responsibility for devising a remedy for the future for the absence from the Flag List of a due proportion of younger officers, and last year I was able to announce that the Committee presided over by Lord Goschen, which had been appointed to assist the Admiralty in the complicated and difficult question of the promotion and retirement of officers, had sent in its Report. That Report has since been dealt with by the Board, and the principal recommendations made by them, which have received His Majsety's approval by Order in Council, affect the Regulations as follows :—

Admirals of the Fleet will, as at present, be retired at the age of seventy. Admirals and Vice-Admirals will be retired at the age of sixty-five, or at any age so soon as five years have elapsed since they last served as Flag Officers. Vice-Admirals are to be retired on attaining the rank of Admiral, if they have not been employed as Vice-Admiral, as at present. Rear Admirals are to be retired at the age of sixty, or at any age so soon as three and a half years have elapsed since they last served as Rear Admiral, or, if they have not served as Rear Admiral, so soon as three and a half years have elapsed since their promotion to the rank of Rear Admiral, or five years since their last service as Captain has ceased. Flag Officers who have not hoisted their flags will be retired at the age of sixty.

Captains are to be retired at the age of fifty-five, or at any age if three years have elapsed since they last served as Captain, or, if they have not served as Captain, so soon as three years have elapsed since their promotion to the rank of Captain.

Commanders are to be retired at the age of fifty, or at any age if three years have elapsed since they last served as Commander, or, if they have not served as Commander, since their service as Lieutenant ceased.

Lieutenants are to be retired at the age of forty-five, or at any age if three years have elapsed since they last served as Lieutenant, or, if they have not served as Lieutenants, since their last service as Sub-Lieutenant ceased.

Flag Officers, Captains, and Commanders are to be allowed to retire at any age at the discretion of the Admiralty on the scale of retired pay provided by the Regulations. In connection with this provision, certain improvements are to be effected in respect of the scale of retired pay for Captains.

The size of the Flag List has been fixed at ninety-two.

These Regulations began to take effect from the 8th December, 1903, the date of His Majesty's Order in Council.

The general effect of these changes should be materially to increase the flow of promotion, but they will not, of course, affect any officer in respect of the rank in which he is now serving. An officer will, however, begin to be affected by them directly he is promoted to a rank higher than that which he at present holds. The effect of these changes on the average age of officers on the Flag List cannot be immediately operative, but in a few years they should insure that those Lieutenants and Commanders who, through their exceptional merit, receive promotion at a comparatively early age will, when they pass on to the Flag List, form a constant and larger proportion of younger Flag Officers than are at present to be found there.

It will be noticed at once that it is not proposed to change the present rule by which promotion from the Captains' List to the Flag List is by seniority and not by selection. The present system works well, and, in my opinion, a better cannot be devised so long as the principle of selection, although not applied to the promotion of Flag Officers, is applied rigorously to their employment. The question to be considered in respect of each vacancy must be which is the Flag Officer most fitted to fill the appointment. I have great sympathy for those officers who find themselves passed over by the application of this system, but the larger the Flag List the less difficult will be the position of such officers, and the good of the Service is the only thing which can be considered. It cannot in any way be reckoned a reflection on an officer that he should be passed over, the number of possible appointments being smaller than the number of officers on the Flag List.

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* To be appointed shortly, as soon as available.

It must always be remembered that the reserve powers in the hands of the Board are ample. In the first place, the undoubted right is reserved to the Crown to select any Captain to be a Flag Officer by Order in Council quite irrespectively of his place on the Captains' List. In the second place, the Board have full discretion as to the employment of Commodores of the first and second class, and the Regulations defining their status and authority are well known. It is not, however, so generally known that by the Order in Council of the 21st November 1855, in response to the Memorial of the Board of Admiralty of the 19th November of the same year, the Board possess full power to confer on any Naval Officer temporary or local rank, and that a Captain, being granted the temporary or local rank of Rear Admiral under this Order in Council would enjoy the same authority, precedence, emoluments, profits, and advantages, in all respects as if he held such rank by the ordinary course of promotion in the Navy. The reason why this reserve power of the Board of Admiralty has not been more widely known is that, by some error in editing, this Order in Council was headed in the published book of Orders in Council by the words "Flag Officers," and has accordingly been held hitherto to confer on the Admiralty only the power of giving the temporary or local rank of Admiral to a Vice-Admiral or of Vice-Admiral to a Rear Admiral. In the original document, however, no such heading appears, and there is no doubt that the real scope of the Order in Council is as I have stated.

The War Course at Greenwich has continued its work with ever-increasing value to the Service. It has been settled that henceforward two complete courses will be held in each year so as to minimise as much as possible the risk of an officer having to go to sea before his course is completed. A short course has also been established for Flag Officers, a commencement from which developments will undoubtedly ensue.

The question of the relative ranks of the officers of the Engineer, Medical, and Accountant branches, has, I hope, been satisfactorily settled. It must be remembered that whereas all officers of these branches (except in cases of misconduct or inefficiency) receive promotion in course of time, only a proportion of Lieutenants can ever become Commanders. It is, therefore, not unjust that the average age of officers of the Engineer, Medical, and Accountant branches of the relative rank of Lieutenant should be somewhat higher than the average age of the Lieutenants themselves.

A scheme has been adopted both in connexion with the Medical branch and with the Chaplains of the Navy, by which young surgeons and young clergymen, who may not desire to make the Navy their permanent sphere of work, may join it for four or five years, at the end of which time they may either join the Service permanently at the discretion of the Admiralty, or leave it with a substantial gratuity. There is no intention of substituting temporary Chaplains or temporary Surgeons for the permanent service, but it is hoped that the permanent service may acquire a valuable supplement from a class of professional men who might not otherwise have joined it. As the scheme has only just come into operation it is too soon to say whether it is going to succeed.

Since my last Memorandum was issued, Professor J. A. Ewing, F.R.S., late Professor of Applied Mechanics in the University of Cambridge, has been appointed Director of Naval Education and Vice-Chairman of the Council of Naval Education. The scheme of entry and training of naval cadets has had the advantage of his supervision almost from the commencement, and it has been inaugurated at the New Royal Naval College at Osborne under excellent auspices. The greatest credit is due to all those who were responsible for the fact that, within nine months from the approval of the new scheme of entry and training, complete accommodation for nearly eighty cadets had been provided at Osborne, the staff had been appointed, and the cadets themselves were under training.

The Board of Admiralty are glad to take this opportunity of expressing their warm acknowledgements to H.M. Office of Works for their assistance in the matter

APPENDIX I.

I am laying before Parliament, as a separate paper, the Reports of the first two Committees of Inspection which have assisted me in selecting candidates for nomination under the new scheme. The plan has been worked with scrupulous fairness and has proved to be a complete success.

The gunnery of the Fleet continues steadily to improve.

During the year the changes in the system of training of the boys and men and officers of the Fleet have been matured and finally settled.

The boys in the training ships will no longer receive any instruction which is solely applicable to the management of sailing ships, and in place of the training they have hitherto received on masts and yards there has been substituted a more extensive training in gunnery and an elementary training in mechanical and stokehold work. The entry and training of boy artificers is proceeding satisfactorily.

The pay of the signalling ratings has been so improved that there is now no dearth of candidates. Proficiency in the use of mechanical tools and in stokehold work will in future form part of the examination for the rating of able seaman, and the course of training of ordinary seamen has been readjusted accordingly. A complete system of physical and gymnastic training has been introduced into the Fleet, and a new scheme for the training and organisation of naval bands has been promulgated and the work has commenced.

The system under which the gunnery and torpedo ratings and the gunnery and torpedo officers have been selected and trained has been readjusted and to a large extent reorganised.

In respect of the gunnery ratings, the object in view has been to reserve the gunnery schools for the higher gunnery ratings only, and to insure that the general gunnery training of the Fleet shall be carried on continuously in the ships at sea and in the naval barracks at the home ports.

In respect of the gunnery officers, the grades have been rearranged into three classes of which the highest only will receive the training of scientific artillerists. The instruction of the other grades will be mainly practical. The training of navigating officers has been reorganised, and the *Mercury* set apart as a special instructional ship for the purpose. The Board have now under consideration a scheme for increasing the number of interpreters and the facilities and inducements to officers of the Navy of all branches and of the Royal Marines for attaining proficiency in foreign languages.

The numbers voted for the current year were 127,000 officers and men active service ratings. Recruiting has been very satisfactory.

The increase proposed for next year is 4,000, and it will consist of the following ratings and ranks :—

Officers		400
Warrant Officers		4
Seamen		2,437
Artisans, etc.		40
Electricians		25
Stokers		1,300
Ratings raised in Australia and New Zealand		400
Marines (Naval Bands)		850
Less reduction of—		5,456
Boys	1,240	
Miscellaneous	216	
		1,456
Total		4,000

APPENDIX 1.

During the last Session of Parliament an Act was passed enabling the Board of Admiralty to make it a condition of enlistment for non-continuous service that, after a limited period of service in the Fleet, the men so enlisted should join the Royal Fleet Reserve for the unexpired portion of twelve years.

It is certain that the full number of 625 stokers and 375 seamen proposed by the Naval Reserves Committee will have been enlisted before the end of the present financial year, and it is proposed to include the same number of non-continuous service men in the increase of next year.

The Royal Fleet Reserve shows very satisfactory progress, and already numbers 8,375 men. The Royal Naval Reserve is at length increasing in numbers, and six ships of the *Apollo* class have been established as sea-going drill-ships round the coast of Great Britain and Ireland. There has not been time to bring into operation all the recommendations of the Naval Reserves Committee in respect of the Royal Naval Reserves generally, or of the new class of firemen, R.N.R., and engine-room artificers, R.N.R., and of warrant engineers, R.N.R., but I look forward to great progress being made with these developments next year. In respect of the officers, a considerable addition to the establishment is contemplated, and increased care is to be taken in the selection of candidates for commissions.

The Newfoundland branch of the Royal Naval Reserve is making steady progress; and, now that the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and New Zealand have adopted the Naval Agreement, I hope that strong branches will shortly be established in Australia and New Zealand; it is hoped also shortly to establish a branch at Malta.

The Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve has made an excellent start both on the Thames and on the Clyde; in each case about 1,000 men have been enrolled. Negotiations are now in progress for the establishment of divisions on the Severn, on the Forth, on the Tay, on the Mersey, on the lower Thames, and on the east and south coast.

Last year I was able to announce that the work of the Admiral Superintendent of Reserves had been entirely severed from the command of the Home Fleet. I have now to report that that officer has received the new designation of Admiral Commanding Coast Guard and Reserves, and his office has been reorganised on a strictly naval basis. Although he has no responsibility for command of a sea-going fleet, he holds a position analogous to that of a naval commander-in-chief at a home port with a naval staff of his own and an office in London. Great Britain and Ireland have been divided into six Coast Guard districts, each under the command of a Captain living onshore, who is responsible to the Admiral Commanding Coast Guard and Reserves or, in the case of the two Irish districts, to the Senior Officer on the coast of Ireland. The responsibility of the Admiral Commanding Coast Guard and Reserves includes the Royal Naval Reserve and the new Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, in respect of which last force he is assisted by an Admiralty Volunteer Committee of which Mr. C. E. H. Chadwyck-Healey, K. C., acts as chairman.

Construction and Reconstruction and Repairs.

All the money voted for the year 1903–4 will have been earned and spent by the 31st March. The progress of the work has been satisfactory and it has been necessary also to ask Parlaiment to sanction a Supplementary Vote for 1,308,000*l.*, of which sum, however, over half is on account of the first instalments of payment for the two battleships built for Chile which have been recently purchased. The amount proposed in the Estimates for 1904–5 for new construction is 11,654,176*l.*, of which about one million is for the completion of the purchase of the battleships mentioned above, and 642,083*l.* will be devoted to the commencement of new ships. It had been the original intention of the Board, as announced in Parliament, to give out the three battleships of the 1903–4 programme to contract, and to commence in the dockyards in April 1904 three battleships of the 1904–5 programme. The progress of the work in the dockyards towards the end of 1903 had, however, been so satisfactory that it became a matter of importance to commence new construction in them at as early a date as possible. It was decided, therefore, to reverse the procedure and instead of giving out the three battleships of the 1903–4 programme to contract to commence them in the dockyards. As the preparation of the new design had not then reached that stage of completion which would have enabled the ships to have been commenced at once, and as experience has shown that four sister ships form a unit possessed of great tactical and administrative convenience, it was further decided that these battleships should be of the same design as the *King Edward VII.*, bringing that class up to a homogeneous squadron of eight battleships or two divisions of four each. The three last battleships of this class will be called the *Britannia*, *Hibernia*, and *Africa*.

In February last, in answer to a question in the House of Commons as to whether the Admiralty were prepared to purchase two battleships which were being constructed in England for the Chilean Government at a cost of 2,200,000*l.*, it was stated that the question had been considered by the Board, and that it was not proposed to purchase those ships, as not being suitable for their purpose. I desire to explain shortly the meaning of this reply, and the reasons why the Board have subsequently bought these ships.

In principle it does not suit the Board to have in the Fleet one or two battleships of a special design. The tactical and administrative advantages of a homogeneous squadron are so great that the principle of modern building policy in respect of battleships is unquestionably to build in homogeneous squadrons. The application of such a principle must, however, obviously be governed by the circumstances of the moment, and the price of a given ship. Under the circumstances which existed a year ago it did not seem to the Board advantageous to the country to invest 2,200,000*l.* in these ships, but under the circumstances of the present moment it did appear to them a good bargain for the country that they should be purchased for 1,875,000*l.* These ships have been re-named the *Swiftsure* and the *Triumph*.

The battleships of the 1904–5 programme will be given out to contract, and will be the first ships of a new design, which will be known as the *Lord Nelson* class.

Between the 1st April 1903, and the 1st March 1904, inclusive, the following ships will have been completed, and passed into the Fleet Reserve :—

6 Battleships—
    Prince of Wales.
    Queen.
    Albemarle.
    Cornwallis.
    Duncan.
    Exmouth.
9 Armoured Cruisers—
    Euryalus.
    Bedford.
    Berwick.
    Cumberland.
    Donegal.
    Essex.
    Lancaster.
    Monmouth.
    Suffolk.
1 Second Class Cruiser—
    Challenger.
2 Sloops—
    Cadmus.
    Clio.
3 Submarines.
11 Destroyers.
8 Torpedo Boats.
1 Repairing Ship and
1 Surveying Vessel (purchased).

APPENDIX I.

On 1st April 1904, there will be under construction :—

8 Battleships.
13 Armoured Cruisers.
1 Second Class Cruiser.
4 Third Class Cruisers.
8 Scouts.
23 Destroyers.
11 Submarines.
1 River Gunboat, and a new Admiralty Yacht.

and it is expected that between the 1st April 1904, and the 31st March 1905, inclusive the following ships will have been completed and passed into the Fleet Reserve :—

3 Battleships.
5 Armoured Cruisers.
1 Second Class Cruiser
4 Third Class Cruisers.
8 Destroyers.
10 Submarines.
1 River Gunboat, and the New Yacht.

It is proposed to commence during the financial year 1904–5 :—

2 Battleships.
4 Armoured Cruisers.
14 Destroyers.
10 Submarines.

The purchase of the two battleships being built for Chile has necessarily modified the situation, and accordingly Parliament is asked to approve of the commencement of two new battleships instead of three, and of their commencement in the autumn instead of in April as proposed last year.

Steady progress has been made during the year with the policy of reconstruction, announced in my statement of two years ago. By the 31st March next the work will have been completed in respect of the battleships *Barfleur* and *Centurion*, and of the battleships of the *Royal Sovereign* class, except the *Repulse*, which is in hand, and the *Hood*, in which ship, owing to the different conditions of stability arising from the fact that she alone of the class possesses turrets, the Director of Naval Construction is not able to advise casemating the upper-deck 6-inch guns. The work has been completed on the *Powerful* and *Terrible*, and on the following 2nd class cruisers (Fleet ram class) :

Furious.
Arrogant.

and *Talbot* class—

Juno.
Doris.
Venus.
Dido.
Isis.

During the year 1904–5, it is expected that work on *Gladiator* and *Vindictive* (Fleet ram class) and *Eclipse, Diana, Talbot, Minerva* (*Talbot* class) will be completed.

The policy of completing in every respect in private yards the ships built in private yards, and of effecting repairs in private yards, has been wholly successful.

In respect of the dockyards, I think it can fairly be stated that steps have been taken in the current year which will greatly increase both their efficiency and the economy of their work. Parliament has sanctioned a loan for the purpose of an electric installation in all the dockyards which will completely furnish them both with light and power, and under a special sub-head HH. of Vote 8, Parliament is being asked to make a special provision in the years 1904–5 and 1905–6 in respect of dockyard machinery.

There is at present a good deal of obsolete machinery in the yards ; the votes asked for in the two years will enable the Board to get rid of all machinery that is out of date, and to complete the equipment of the yards with machinery of the newest and most economical type.

The experiments with oil fuel have continued without a day's intermission, and I think it can be accurately stated that in no country has greater attention been given to this subject or the experiments been more exhaustive. The progress has been slow but sure ; it is not a matter which can be hurried ; the great difficulties connected with the satisfactory use of oil in ships of war can only be overcome by patience and continual experiment ; the experience gained with the *Mars* and *Hannibal* in the Channel Fleet with their cylindrical boilers has been utilised in respect of the Belleville boilers of the *Bedford*, which has now been commissioned for service in the Channel Fleet. Simultaneously with the experiments in the use of oil fuel the question of its storage and supply is being carefully studied.

Distribution of the Fleet.

The Parliaments of the Commonwealth of Australia and of New Zealand have sanctioned the proposals of the Colonial Conference of 1902, and the Australian Squadron will, as soon as possible, be constituted as described in the papers already laid before Parliament.

The policy of composing the squadrons or divisions of squadrons of battleships in the Home, Channel, Mediterranean, and China Fleets of homogeneous classes of ships has been steadily adhered to. The Home Fleet will shortly be composed of four ships of the *Royal Sovereign* class and of a faster division consisting of two ships of the *Duncan* class and the two ships recently purchased. The Channel Fleet will contain eight ships of the *Majestic* class ; and the Mediterranean Fleet will include eight ships of the *Formidable* class and four ships of the *Duncan* class. In the China Fleet there will be four battleships of the *Canopus* class, with the *Centurion* and the *Barfleur*.

The Cruiser Squadron consists of two ships of the *Drake* class, and four of the *Monmouth* class. In addition two armoured cruisers are attached to each of the Home, Channel, Mediterranean, and China Fleets, and one to the Australian Squadron.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet has been given complete and continuous command of the Home destroyer flotillas, and an additional Rear Admiral has been appointed to the Mediterranean Fleet.

I append the usual statement of the work done in the past year by the various departments of the Admiralty.

SELBORNE.

1 February 1904.

STATEMENT OF WORK, 1903–4, &c.

CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF FLEETS.

Mediterranean.

The most important changes have occurred in the Battleship Squadron. Great progress has been made in the direction of homogeneity by the substitution of the six* vessels of the *Duncan* class for the *Canopus*, *Ramillies*, *Repulse*, *Renown*, *Cæsar*, and *Victorious*, vessels of no less than four different types. The *Illustrious* will shortly be withdrawn without relief in order to form part of the enlarged Channel Fleet, and the Mediterranean Fleet will then consist of 12 ships representing only two different classes, in three divisions of four, with a Flag Officer at the head of each.

The Second Class Cruisers *Gladiator* and *Vindictive* have been relieved by the *Arrogant* and *Furious*, vessels of the same type, but rendered more powerful by their recent re-armament.

The Third Class Cruiser *Mohawk* has been detached temporarily for service on the Somali Coast.

It is intended to effect a redistribution of the Torpedo Boats on the Station, the most modern boats being concentrated at Gibraltar, while the remainder are attached to Malta.

The *Leander* has been reconstructed as a seagoing Depot Ship for Torpedo Boat Destroyers, and has proceeded to the Station in order to take up her new duties in conjunction with the *Tyne*.

The Sailing Sloop *Cruiser* has been withdrawn from duty as Training Ship for Ordinary Seamen.

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* Two of these will shortly be transferred to the Home Fleet in place of the *Benbow* and *Anson*, and will be replaced in the Mediterranean by the *Queen* and *Prince of Wales* (*Formidable* class). The Fleet will thus be composed as stated on page .

APPENDIX I.

North America.

The *Hotspur* is to be sold, and her place as Port Guard Ship at Bermuda is to be taken by the *Rupert*, a similar vessel, but considerably larger and fitted with more modern engines and guns.

The North American Squadron is at present cruising in the West Indies in company with the Cruiser Squadron.

It has recently been found necessary to detach the two sloops *Fantome* and *Alert* to patrol the Venezuelan Coast for the protection of British interests.

South Atlantic.

The new station, whose establishment was decided on in 1902–3, came into existence on August 1st. It includes the old South East Coast of America Station and the West Coast of Africa Division of the Cape of Good Hope Station. A detachment, composed of the *Blanche*, 3rd Class Cruiser, the *Beagle*, sloop, and the shallow draft gunboats, *Dwarf* and *Thistle*, was transferred to the new command from the Cape Station, and the Squadron has since been strengthened by the substitution of the 3rd Class Cruiser *Tartar* for the composite sloop *Nymphe*, and of the 2nd Class Cruiser *Brilliant* for the *Blanche*. The Flagship *Cambrian*, 2nd Class Cruiser, will shortly be relieved by the *St. George*, a 1st Class Cruiser.

Pacific.

The squadron being considered too small to form a Rear-Admiral's command, Rear-Admiral A. K. Bickford, C.M.G., has been relieved by Commodore J. E. C. Goodrich, M.V.O. The Cruiser *Amphion* has been relieved by the *Bonaventure*.

The Torpedo Boat Destroyers *Virago* and *Sparrowhawk* have been transferred to the China Station.

On December 3rd the *Flora* ran ashore at Union Bay, British Columbia, but though at one time in a dangerous position, she was towed off and safely docked without suffering serious damage.

Cape.

No change of any importance has been made in the Squadron except, as already stated, the transfer of four ships to reinforce the newly-created South Atlantic Station.

Since 1st August 1903, the Station limits have included the Islands of Madagascar Mauritius, and Seychelles, which formerly lay within the limits of the East Indies command, but have been reduced by the transfer of the West Coast of Africa Division to the South Atlantic Station.

East Indies.

The agreement with the Indian Government for manning the Indian Harbour Defences has now been determined, and the *Assaye*, First Class Torpedo Gunboat, the Torpedo Boats 101, 104, 105, and 106, have been withdrawn from Indian waters and have arrived in England.

Operations have been conducted in conjunction with the Italian Squadron on the Station to prevent the smuggling of arms into Somaliland.

H.M.S. *Argonaut*, while on her way back from China, was attached temporarily to the East Indies Station in order to form an escort for the Viceroy of India during his visit to the Persian Gulf.

China.

The Squadron has been reinforced by the *Centurion*, First Class Battleship; and the *Vengeance*, First Class Battleship, has been transferred from the Mediterranean to the China Station, the *Goliath*, First Class Battleship, returning to England on relief by the *Vengeance*. The *Argonaut*, First Class Cruiser, has been relieved by the Armoured Cruiser *Leviathan*, and the First Class Cruiser *Blenheim* is shortly to be relieved by the First Class Cruiser *Andromeda*. The Second Class Cruiser *Pique* has been relieved by the *Sirius*, a ship of the same Class. With the addition of the *Sparrowhawk* and *Virago* (transferred from the Pacific Station) there are now nine Torpedo Boat Destroyers on the China Station, of which four are in Commission and five in Reserve at Hong Kong. The *Mutine*, Sloop, has been transferred to the Australian Station.

Australia.

The conclusion of the new Naval Agreement with Australia and New Zealand has necessitated considerable changes in the composition of the Squadron, some of which have already taken place, whilst others will be effected in the near future. Prior to the Agreement the Naval force on the Station consisted of one First Class Cruiser, eight Third Class Cruisers (including two in Reserve) one Sloop and four Gunboats (including one in Reserve). Under the new Agreement the Squadron is ultimately to comprise not less than one Armoured Cruiser, First Class, two Second Class Cruisers (including one in Reserve), four Third Class Cruisers (three being Drill Ships) and four Sloops. The three vessels used as Drill Ships and one other vessel will be manned by Colonials so far as procurable, and will be officered by Officers of the Royal Navy, supplemented by Officers of the Royal Naval Reserve.

The three Third Class Cruisers *Tauranga*, *Katoomba*, and *Mildura* have been formally commissioned as Drill Ships, and their Naval Crews will be reduced as Colonials enter; the place of the *Katoomba* as Guardship at Sydney being taken by the *Wallaroo*. The *Archer* (Third Class Cruiser) has been relieved by the Third Class Cruiser *Psyche*. The *Karrakatta*, Torpedo Gunboat, has been withdrawn from the Station on relief by the *Mutine*, Sloop, transferred from China. The First Class Armoured Cruiser *Euryalus* has been commissioned to replace the First Class Cruiser *Royal Arthur* as Flagship. The *Clio*, Sloop, has been commissioned to relieve the *Sparrow*, Gunboat, and the *Lizard*, Gunboat, will shortly be relieved by the *Cadmus*, Sloop. The further changes in the composition of the Squadron will be eventually completed by the arrival of two new Second Class Cruisers on the Station.

The Station is now, and will in future be a Vice-Admiral's command.

Cruiser Squadron.

The *Medea* and *Medusa*, Third Class Cruisers, have been withdrawn from the Squadron. The *Minerva*, Second Class Cruiser, has been relieved by the First Class Armoured Cruiser *Berwick*, and the *Brilliant* and *Rainbow*, Second Class Cruisers, have been relieved by the First Class Armoured Cruisers *Kent* and *Donegal* respectively. The place of the Second Class Cruiser *Hycinth*, which was withdrawn from the Squadron early last year, has now been taken by the First Class Armoured Cruiser *Monmouth*. The Squadron thus comprises six 23-knot Armoured Cruisers, of which two are of the *Drake* and four are of the *Monmouth* class.

Channel Fleet.

The *Majestic* and *Magnificent* (First Class Battleships), which have been attached to the Channel Fleet since December 1895, are to be relieved early in February by two sister ships, the *Cæsar* and *Victorious*, and will rejoin the Channel Fleet in May next after refit, thus bringing up the number of Battleships to eight (all of *Majestic* class). The *Hogue*, First Class Armoured Cruiser, and the *Furious*, Second Class Cruiser, have been relieved by the First Class Armoured Cruiser *Bedford* and the Second Class Cruiser *Hermes* respectively. The *Hermes* is at present carrying out trials under the superintendence of the Boiler Committee.

Home Fleet, &c.

In May last important changes were introduced affecting the organisation both of the Home Fleet and of the Coast Guard Service on shore. The Coast Guard District

Ships, which hitherto had only been able to be in company with the four ships of the Home Squadron during the periodical cruises, were relieved of their shore duties and have since been permanently attached to the Flag of the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet. The Coast Guard Service and the Reserves were at the same time placed under the control of a Flag Officer distinct from the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, and known as the Admiral Commanding Coast Guard and Reserves. The Coast Guard Service was distributed over six Coast Guard Districts—three in England, one in Scotland, and two in Ireland, each under the command of a District Captain responsible to the A.C.R.; and to each District a Second Class Cruiser of the *Apollo* type was attached as a Drill Ship for R.N.R. The sea training of R.N.R. men is still carried out in Home Fleet ships, some of which are sent periodically to the several Districts for the embarkation and disembarkation of men who are entering upon or have completed their period of training. The various ships employed on Fishery service are under the orders of the A.C.R., but such as can be spared from their Fishery duties are lent to the Home Fleet from time to time for purposes of drills and exercises.

The Senior Officer on the Coast of Ireland acts as Deputy to the A.C.R., for Coast Guard duties in Ireland.

The following changes have been made in the composition of the Home Fleet :—

The *Resolution*, First Class Battleship, has been relieved by the *Edgar* (First Class Cruiser), and has subsequently herself replaced the *Sans Pareil*.

The *Camperdown* and *Collingwood*, First Class Battleships, have been relieved respectively by the *Hawke*, First Class Cruiser, and the *Hood*, First Class Battleship.

Destroyer Organisation.

The three flotillas of Torpedo Boat Destroyers on the Home Station have been placed in charge of a Captain acting under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, and the office of Inspecting Captain of Torpedo Boat Destroyers has been abolished. The flotillas will still be worked from the ports where their Depot Ships are moored. It is intended to transfer the Portsmouth Flotilla to Portland as soon as suitable mooring arrangements can be made at the latter port, and the *Invincible* is ready to assume the duties of Depot Ship to the Flotilla. The Depot Ship *Audacious* has been transferred to Felixstowe, which will be the headquarters of the Medway Flotilla.

Home Ports.

The *Thames* has taken the place of the *Latona* as Depot Ship for Submarine Boats.

At Devonport the *Impregnable* has taken the place of the *Temeraire* as Flagship of the Commander-in-Chief.

The sailing brigs used in the Training Service have been withdrawn.

The *Aurora*, First Class Cruiser, has been commissioned as additional sea-going tender to the *Britannia* at Dartmouth.

Manœuvres.

In August last the bulk of the Mediterranean, Home and Channel Fleets, and Cruiser Squadron, together with a number of other ships specially commissioned, or completed, took part in Fleet Manœuvres in the Atlantic. The manœuvres were followed by a series of tactical exercises. At the same time all available Torpedo Craft, with Cruisers and special Service vessels on the Home Station were engaged in manœuvres off the coast of Ireland.

APPENDIX I.

PERSONNEL.

The measures necessary for carrying out the new scheme of entry and training of Naval Officers, to which reference was made in the last annual statement, have been proceeded with during the year.

The Royal Naval College at Osborne has been established and equipped for its work, and in September last the College was opened for the reception of the first entry of Cadet

Further steps have been taken to improve the general training of Engineer Cadets. and the course of studies at the Royal Naval Engineering College has been revised.

Orders have been given for the carrying out afloat of the system of training of seamen in mechanical and stokehold work.

The new system of training for boys has been introduced, and is now being carried out in all the stationary Training Establishments. The *Iris* has been commissioned as a tender to these Establishments for the purpose of carrying out such parts of the training for which a sea-going ship is essential, and the *Medea* and *Medusa*, when their present trials have been completed, will be similarly detailed for the same duty.

The new system of training in the Gunnery and Torpedo Schools and in the Naval Barracks has been established at all the Home Ports, and full instructions have been issued as to the various courses of instruction through which the men have to pass.

New rates of allowances have been introduced in connection with the new system of qualification in Gunnery and Torpedo, with the object of giving better pay to the more highly skilled gunners or best shots.

The courses for Lieutenants qualifying in Gunnery and Torpedo have been revised with the object of giving greater prominence to the practical part of the courses, while reserving the College course for the more scientific and highly qualified Officers.

A civilian expert in Physics, &c., has been appointed to assist the Staffs of the Gunnery and Torpedo Schools at Portsmouth, where his assistance has been found of great value.

Changes have been introduced in the selection, training, and advancement of Navigating Officers of the Royal Navy. A Navigation School Ship has been established at Portsmouth with a suitable staff of Instructors, and the School will have a position similar to that of the Gunnery and Torpedo Schools.

A tender has been attached to the School Ship *Mercury* for the purpose of extending the training of Officers in Coast Navigation.

The training of Boy Artificers has now been established at each of the Home Ports, and some 180 Boys are now undergoing instruction in the Fleet Reserves.

Steps have been taken to establish the ratings of Mechanician, Yeoman of Stores, and Engineer's Writer, and it is expected that these ratings will prove a valuable adjunct to the Staff of the Engine Room.

Effect has been given to the proposal for the establishment of the new rank of Chief Artificer Engineer, and a limited number of promotions have been made.

Steps have also been taken for the promotion of a proportion of Officers from the lists of Chief Gunners, Chief Boatswains, Chief Signal Boatswains, and Chief Carpenters to the rank of Lieutenant, Royal Navy, and two Chief Artificer Engineers will be advanced so soon as they have been one year in their new grade.

The pay of Signal ratings has been improved with the object of encouraging a larger number of men to qualify for the Higher Standard in Signalling.

Chief Petty Officers have been granted an addition to their rates of pension of ½d. a day for each year's service in Chief Petty rank, subsequent to the completion of their first period of continuous service.

Provision has been made for the award of a gratuity on discharge to seamen and marines holding a conspicuous gallantry medal in cases where an annuity is not payable.

The rank of Paymaster-in-Chief on the Active List has been established for Accountant Officers. Paymasters-in-Chief, so promoted, will have relative rank with Captains, Royal Navy.

Directions have been given for the instruction of certain Officers and ranks and ratings in the principles of first aid to the injured.

Considerable progress has been made in giving effect to the recommendations of Sir E. Grey's Committee on the Naval Reserves.

A scheme for the organisation of Royal Marine Volunteers is being worked out by the Volunteer Committee, and it is hoped that good progress will be made with the Scheme by the coming summer.

Regulations for the entry of non-continuous service seamen and stokers have been laid down, and a commencement made in enlisting men. The entries so far (9th January 1904), viz., 261 seamen and 328 stokers, justify the expectation that the full 1,000 voted will be reached by the end of the financial year. The reports upon these men from ships in which they have been embarked are completely satisfactory.

The trial made last summer and autumn in the training of bank clerks as a reserve of Accountant Officers was on the whole satisfactory, and steps are now being taken to organise a reserve of such Accountants as a distinct branch of Officers of the Royal Naval Reserve.

Steps are being taken to extend among medical men, both at home and in the Colonies, a knowledge of the conditions under which the services of civil practitioners will be accepted in time of war. A limited number of names have been already enrolled at home, and the response from the Australasian Colonies has been sufficient to show that the feeling there is favourable and that a fair number of volunteers may be expected.

The Scheme for the establishment of a Sick Berth Attendants' Reserve has not so far attracted the number of volunteers which the Admiralty had reason to expect. Some 170 volunteers have been enrolled up to the present time.

THE ROYAL MARINES.

A School of Music for the training of Bandsmen for service afloat has been established with temporary Head Quarters at the R.M. Artillery Division at Eastney. The new class of Bandsmen and Boys are enlisted as Marines under the same conditions as other men and boys of the Corps, but with rates of pay special to themselves.

The pay and allowances of Warrant Officers, N.C. Officers, and men have recently been the subject of much consideration, and arrangements have been made to adjust the same to a scale somewhat similar to that approved for the Army, certain increases being made dependent upon improved efficiency, having due regard to the conditions of service in the Corps. They will come into force on 1st April 1904.

During the year 6,261 Marines passed the course of Musketry afloat under Naval conditions, about 14 per cent. qualifying as marksmen. There were 3,095 trained Marines exercised on shore under the new Army Regulations, of whom 6 per cent. qualified as marksmen—the latter small percentage being due to the more stringent conditions of the new course instituted in April 1903.

NAVAL RESERVES.

It is proposed to increase the personnel of the Coast Guard from 4,237 to 4,303. This increase includes provision for the new District Captains and their Clerical Staffs. The remainder are required for new Signal Stations which are to be kept manned in peace time, and for wireless telegraph work.

In order to ensure that the men who will work the War Signal Stations shall have constant practice in peace time, an agreement has been made with Lloyd's by which the Commercial Maritime Signalling carried out by Lloyd's will be transferred to the Coast Guard at 21 Signal Stations.

This work is now being done at 14 Stations, and at the remaining seven it will be transferred when Lloyd's have provided the necessary houses for the Coast Guard crews.

It is also proposed to carry out Commercial Wireless Telegraphy for Lloyd's at certain Stations, practice being even more important in this branch of signalling than in visual work.

It is proposed to increase the number of Executive Officers from 1,550 to 1,600 during the coming financial year.

Two hundred and ninety-two qualified candidates are on the lists of applicants for appointment.

The numbers now undergoing naval training in H.M. ships are—

	Lieuts.	Sub-Lieuts.	Mids.	Total.
12 months' training	26	52	21	99
Gunnery and Torpedo courses	13	11	8	32

Three hundred and twenty-three officers on the Active List have already undergone this training, and are in receipt of training fees.

The establishment of Commissioned Engineer officers is fixed at 400, and there are now borne :—

Senior Engineers	71
Engineers	199
Assistant Engineers	111
	381

There are 100 qualified candidates on the list of applicants for appointment, but it is not proposed to fill any of the above vacancies except by exceptionally desirable candidates, owing to the recent introduction of a new rank of Warrant Engineer, for 180 of whom provision is made in the Estimates.

The following Officers have completed or are undergoing courses at the Dockyards :—

Senior Engineers	25
Engineers	78
Assistant Engineers	28
	131

Royal Naval Reserve Men.

The numbers borne on 31st December as compared with those voted for 1903–4, and former years, are :—

Class.	Voted.	Borne.		
	1903-4.	31.12.03	31.12.02	31.12.01
Qualified Seamen	11,300	5,173	4,298	3,485
1st Class (Old System)		6,020	6,472	7,106
Seamen	10,500	6,374	5,572	4,973
2nd Class (Old System)		3,900	4,273	5,063
Firemen	4,200	4,540	4,033	3,714
Total	26,000	26,007	24,648	24,341

1,522 Qualified Seamen and Seamen have been embarked in H.M. Ships for Naval Training during the year 1903, as against 1,207 in the preceding year.

The rating of Engine Room Artificer, Royal Naval Reserve, has been instituted, and engineers of the Mercantile Marine and Engineering Yards are eligible for enrolment under certain conditions. They are required to undergo Naval Training to the same extent as the Warrant Engineers, R.N.R., and will also receive annual retainers, and pensions. The rating of Leading Seaman has been established.

A special class of Firemen, R.N.R. (to be drawn from stokers in gas and electric light factories and other works), was instituted during the year. An annual retainer is payable to these men on completing satisfactorily a term of three months' training on board H.M. Ships, and six months' further service together with 14 days' drill annually in other years will entitle them to a life pension.

The new rank of Commander, R.N.R., has been established.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

Benefits of Greenwich Hospital.—The scale of pensions provided from Greenwich Hospital funds for the widows of Seamen and Marines killed or drowned on duty has been improved and it now corresponds with that for which provision is made from Naval Funds for the widows of men whose death is brought about by warlike operations.

The additional cost (at present about 2,000*l.* a year) is borne by Naval Funds.

Landed Estates.—The Committee appointed to inquire into the condition of the property at Greenwich having furnished their report, and its main features having been approved by the Board, the recommendations of the Committee are being acted upon as opportunity permits.

The unfavourable weather in the summer and autumn of last year caused much damage to the corn crops on the Northern Estates ; to mitigate the loss to the tenants which was caused thereby an abatement of rent was granted at the last audit in the case of the arable farms varying from 10 to 15 per cent. according to circumstances. There are not any farms in hand.

School.—The high standard of excellence attained by the Royal Hospital School at Greenwich is fully maintained, and in his report for the past year H.M. Inspector stated that " the instruction is sound and thorough, and the order is very good." The maximum grant was earned for the period.

ORDNANCE.

The amount asked for is 3,646,000*l.* as against 3,206,100*l.* voted for 1903–4, or an increase of 439,900*l.* Of this, 400,000*l.* is provision for the purchased ships *Triumph* and *Swiftsure.*

Guns and Mountings.—During the year 1903–4 progress in gun manufacture and supply has been satisfactory. All requirements for re-armaments and new construction have been fully met.

Good progress in the development of guns of higher power has been made, and new designs of several natures are being manufactured.

The question of working B.L. guns at higher chamber pressures is being considered, and an experimental 9·2-inch B.L. gun of new design is under manufacture, in which the chamber pressure will be 20 tons per square inch.

The introduction of the improved form of Cordite (M.D.) is being steadily proceeded with. This propellant is calculated to improve the ballistics of our guns generally (both new and existing designs) while adding to the " life " of the gun.

Further experiments with " capped " projectiles have resulted in the adoption of a reliable capped projectile for some of the new guns and in the capping of certain existing projectiles.

APPENDIX 1.

The efforts which have been made for some years to provide a reserve of war munitions adequate for any emergency were not relaxed during the past year, and the stock is considered to be sufficient to meet all requirements at the outbreak and during the earlier stages of a war and also until the great manufacturing resources of the country would enable us to replenish the stock. This condition is facilitated by that policy which is being steadily pursued of the Admiralty procuring, storing and retaining complete control over, the supplies of Ordnance Stores required by the Fleet.

The reserves of mountings are in a satisfactory state, and further necessary accommodation for them is being provided.

Re-armaments.

In Merchant Cruiser Armaments, 5-inch B.L. have been replaced by 4·7-inch Q.F. at home, and 1-inch Nordenfelts by 3-prs. at home and abroad.

Progress has been made in re-arming Royal Naval Reserve Drill Ships and Batteries with converted guns with mechanism of latest pattern. It is hoped that the whole scheme of re-armament will be completed in 1905–6.

Instructional Armaments, &c.

In connection with the new scheme of Gunnery Training, various additions to and alterations in the armament of the batteries at the several RoyalNaval Barracks have been found necessary. These have already been provided for, for the most part, by loan of guns, etc., from reserves. Amounts for replacements where necessary have been inserted in the 1904–5 Estimates.

A great improvement has been made in instructional appliances for teaching accurate firing. The general supply of these is well advanced and is being proceeded with.

Ordnance Depots.

The separation of Naval and Military Stores at depots abroad cannot be effected rapidly owing to the many questions involved, but a committee at Hong-Kong has made definite recommendations for the separation of Naval and Military Ordnance Stores and the Naval Ordnance Establishment at Bermuda has been separated from the Army Ordnance Department.

The question of Ordnance Store accommodation at home, and its most advantageous distribution, is also receiving attention, and in view of the future importance of Rosyth in the Firth of Forth it will be necessary to provide in that locality for this essential portion of a warship's equipment. The magazines at Lodge Hill (Chatham) are now practically complete ahd in use. It has been decided to add to this establishment a laboratory for manufacurte, repair and examination of cartridges, etc.

An agreement has been made with the Marconi Company which has enabled a great advance to be made in the Service. A general re-organisation of the system is contemplated throughout the Service.

The *Ariadne* from Portsmouth Torpedo School is being prepared as a school for Sheerness, to train all the higher Torpedo Ratings in the Nore command.

COALING OF THE FLEET.

The construction of the large floating coal depot, fitted with rapid working transporters, is nearing completion, and delivery is to be made at one of the Home Ports at an early date.

Considerable improvements in the coaling facilities afloat have been effected by the addition of craft fitted with the latest appliances, and further additions are provided for in the Estimates for 1904–1905.

Experiments are still in progress with apparatus for coaling His Majesty's Ships at sea, and certain trials will be continued in 1904–1905.

The building up of the reserve stocks of patent fuel at home and abroad is being continued.

APPENDIX I.

Three old gunboats have been converted into tank vessels for storing oil fuel at the Home Ports, and further provision has been made for increasing the accommodation and facilities afloat for supplying this fuel to ships whose furnaces have been fitted for its use.

NEW CONSTRUCTION.

The Vote for New Construction during 1903–4 is greater than in any preceding year. The work on the ships in hand has made good progress.

In accordance with the arrangements made last year, all the ships now being built by Contract are to be entirely completed for passing into Fleet Reserve before acceptance from Contractors.

The three Armoured Cruisers, *Donegal*, *Berwick*, and *Cumberland*, have already been delivered complete under this arrangement. We have also had the Torpedo Boat Destroyer *Itchen* delivered complete for passing into Fleet Reserve under the same arrangement.

The experience gained by this procedure fully establishes the advantage of the policy adopted in taking this action. The organisation of the Staff necessary to give full effect to this procedure has been the subject of much discussion and the arrangements made have been found in practice to work very efficiently.

Some important trials have been in progress for some months past with regard to the resistance of vessels at high speeds so far as it is affected by (*a*) depth of water; (*b*) different kinds of compositions for coating the bottom.

Battleships.

The Battleships of *Duncan* Class, ordered under provision programmes, have all been completed and commissioned.

Of the eight vessels of *Formidable* Class, six are complete and in commission, the two remaining, viz., the *Queen* and *Prince of Wales*, will be completed next month.

The five vessels of *King Edward VII.* Class, ordered previous to 1903–4, have made good progress.

The three Battleships intended to have been laid down by Contract during the present financial year have been ordered to be built in the Royal Dockyards. They have been named *Africa*, *Britannia*, and *Hibernia*.

First Class Armoured Cruisers.

Six vessels of the *Kent* class have been completed, and nine of them have successfully passed their steam trials. In all those cases where the vessels have been tried in deep water and with the new pattern screw, speeds considerably exceeding the designed speed of 23 knots have been obtained. It is, in fact, now known that these vessels can attain a smooth water speed of 23 knots when carrying the whole of their coal, over 1,700 tons, and all other stores.

As the 7·5-inch gun which the *Devonshire* Class carry is a new one, it has been necessary to work out suitable arrangements of gun mountings and appliances for stowing, working, and hoisting ammunition to the guns. It has also been necessary to work out the question of a more satisfactory hoist for 6-inch guns and a new hoist of continuous type is now under trial.

In all the vessels of this class there are being fitted revised arrangements for the removal of ashes by means of ejectors on the See system.

Since the first two vessels of the *Duke of Edinburgh* class were ordered, substantial additions to their armament have been made. A stern torpedo tube has been fitted firing right aft on the centre line, and 6-inch 50-calibre guns have been arranged for instead of those of existing pattern. This has involved working out modified arrangements of gunports and armour.

APPENDIX I.

Three of the four Armoured Cruisers provided in the present year's Programme have been ordered by contract, and have been named *Achilles, Cochrane*, and *Natal*; the fourth has been ordered to be built at Pembroke and has been named *Warrior*.

Third Class Cruisers.

It has been decided not to proceed with the three Third Class Cruisers provided for in the original programme.

Scouts.

The four Scouts provided for in the current programme have been ordered by contract, one from each of the builders of the four first Scouts. The second four Scouts have been named as follows :—*Attentive, Foresight, Patrol*, and *Skirmisher.*

Torpedo Boat Destroyers.

The fifteen Destroyers in programme of 1903–4 are repeats of those ordered in the previous year with the exception of a modification in the position of the forward 6-pounder Guns. Orders for these have been placed by contract.

The 19 Destroyers building at the beginning of the financial year will shortly be ready for Commission.

Submarines.

Orders for nine out of the ten Submarine Boats provided for in this year's programme have been placed. These are similar to A. Class already building. A special design is being prepared for the tenth boat and the order for this boat will shortly be placed. Six of those ordered previously have been delivered.

Coast Guard Cruisers.

The two *Coast Guard Cruisers* provided for in this year's programme are of new types, designs for which have been prepared at the Admiralty.

Surveying Ship.

The Steam Yacht *Consuelo* has been purchased for this service, and renamed *Sealark.*

Armour.

There is now no difficulty in obtaining supplies of armour to promptly meet the needs of ships building. A very large sum is needed each year to meet expenditure on armour; the expenditure this year will probably reach about £1,810,000. Continued satisfactory trials have been made to ascertain that the quality of supplies from the armour-plate makers was equal to the contract conditions. The possibility of obtaining improved qualities of armour has been kept in view. Some trials in connexion with this subject have already been made, and further trials are in contemplation.

MACHINERY AND BOILERS.

Of the Torpedo Gunboats, which are being re-engined and re-boilered with small tube water-tube boilers, associated with light quick-running engines, the *Jason, Circe*, and *Leda* have successfully completed their trials. The *Halcyon* will be completed early next year.

The water-tube boilers have now been fitted in fourteen First Class Torpedo Boats. New water-tube boilers have been obtained or will shortly be obtained by contract for twelve other First Class Torpedo Boats, in addition to new water-tube boilers for ten other boats, which are being made at the Dockyards.

The policy adopted last year of fitting a combination of one-fifth cylindrical and four-fifths water-tube boilers in Battleships and First Class Cruisers has been continued, the new Battleships of the 1903–04 programme of the *King Edward VII.* class being fitted with four-fifths Babcock and Wilcox boilers, and the four new Cruisers of the

Duke of Edinburgh class with four-fifths Yarrow (large tube) boilers. The cylindrical and Yarrow boilers are in all cases fitted with closed stokehold system of draught. The Yarrow boilers for the Dockyard built ship of the *Duke of Edinburgh* class (*Warrior*) will be made by Messrs. Yarrow.

The *Hermes* has been re-boilered with Babcock and Wilcox boilers and has sucessfully carried out contractor's steam trials. A series of trials under the direction of the Boiler Committee have been already carried out, but before the contemplated trial to Gibraltar and back a further series of trials will be made to compare two systems of furnance gas baffling in this type of boiler, as well as a trial with new propellers shortly to be fitted, to increase the propulsive efficiency.

The comparative trials under the direction of the Boiler Committee between the *Medea* fitted with Yarrow (large tube) boilers and the *Medusa* fitted with "Dürr" boilers have been continued during the year, including the trial to Gibraltar and back, but complete records to enable comparison to be made between these two types of boilers have not yet been received from the Boiler Committee. All these three ships, the *Hermes*, *Medea*, and *Medusa*, took part in this year's manœuvres.

The *Spartiate* and *Europa*, each ship fitted with Belleville boilers with economisers, have made trips to China and back with relief crews for ships on that station, and the opportunity was taken to run these ships under various trial conditions and at high speeds. Satisfactory results were obtained.

The *Hyacinth* and *Minerva* during this year repeated the comparative trial runs to Gibraltar and back under similar conditions to those trials which had been previously carried out under the direction of the Boiler Committee, and the information obtained has been of much value.

The automatic forced lubricating arrangements fitted for main engines in *Syren* continue to work satisfactorily, and two of the new torpedo boat destroyers will be so fitted.

Turbine Propelling Machinery.

The *Velox*, fitted with turbine machinery, and also with small reciprocating engines for use at low speeds, has completed her contractors' trials, and is now at Portsmouth, and will shortly carry out a further series of experimental trials.

One of the new Third Class Protected Cruisers (the *Amethyst*) and a Destroyer (the *Eden*) are being fitted with turbine machinery, with auxiliary turbines for use at low speeds. Valuable experience will shortly be obtained on the trials of these vessels.

Liquid Fuel.

The experiments with liquid fuel have been continued, and much valuable information has been gained. In the Battleships *Mars* and *Hannibal*, many of the difficulties connected with the installations in these ships have been overcome as the result of practical experience at sea, and they are to be have their oil-burning system extended. When this work is complete all their boilers will be capable of burning either oil and coal or coal alone.

The cruiser *Bedford* has had part of her boilers fitted to burn oil and coal or coal alone, and is now in commission. The destroyer *Spiteful* is having all her boilers fitted to burn liquid fuel. As the manipulation of liquid fuel fittings requires much skill in order to ensure the best results, several boilers of different types are being purchased and fitted up at Portsmouth in order that the various problems connected with liquid fuel and water-tube boilers may be more effectively studied, and instruction given to the engine-room ratings of the Fleet.

The progress which is being made in internal combustion engines is being closely watched, and experiments will be made to determine whether this type of engine, which possesses advantages in fuel economy, can be adapted to the needs of the Service.

APPENDIX I.

Standardisation.

The policy of standardising the machinery of war vessels has been carried out in the six First Class Cruisers of the *Duke of Edinburgh* class, and has been effected with some of the water-tube boilers and the principal pipe connections.

In other vessels, the system of causing all the auxiliary machinery of similar vessels ordered at the same time to be identical and interchangeable, is still pursued.

Large Repairs during 1903–4 at the Home Dockyards and by Contract.

The following ships have been or will be completed :—

By Dockyards.

Andromeda.
Arrogant.
(a)*Audacious.*
(e)*Barfleur.*
Bonaventure.
Brilliant.
Cæsar.
(e)*Centurion.*
Furious.
Hood.
(a)*Invincible.*
Juno.
(b)*Leander.*
Proserpine.
(e)*Ramillies.*
Resolution.
(e)*Royal Sovereign.*
(c)*Satellite.*
Tartar.
Theseus.
Thrush.
Victorious.
(c)*Wild Swan.*

By Contract.

Astræa.
Aurora.
(d)*Circe.*
Colossus.
Endymion.
Hecla.
Hermes.
Howe.
(d)*Jason.*
(d)*Leda.*
Niobe.
Pelorus.
Psyche.
Maine.
Crescent.
St. George.
(e)*Terrible.*
(d)*Halcyon.*

(a)—Base for Destroyers.
(b)—Sea-going Base for Destroyers.
(c)—Drill Ship (R.N.R.).
(d)—Re-engining.
(e)—Casemating, &c.

The following have been or will be commenced during 1903–4, and will be completed in 1904–5 :—

By Dockyards.

Barham.
Magnificent.
Majestic.
Minerva.
Nile.
Philomel.
Repulse.
Rodney.
Trafalgar.

By Contract.

Argonaut.
Canopus.
Goliath.
Glory (*at Hong Kong*).
Highflyer.

The details of the repairs and refits proposed to be carried out in 1904–5 appear in the Appendix to the Navy Estimates, but the principal refits to be dealt with in 1904–05 are given below :—

By Dockyards.

Anson.
Ariadne (old).
Barracouta.
Benbow.
Blenheim.
Cambrian.
Talbot.
Edgar.
Gibraltar.
Gladiator.
Hannibal.
Hawke.

By Contract.

Pique.
Rainbow.
† *Triumph* (old).
Warrior.

APPENDIX I.

By Dockyards.

Camperdown.
Collingwood.
Cressy.
Diana.
Eclipse.
Royal Arthur.
Sans Pareil.
Sutlej.
Jupiter.
Mars.
Naiad.
Nymphe.
Prince George.
Renown.
Thunderer.
Vindictive.

NEW WORKS.

Works Provided in Estimates.

Chatham.—The Mould Loft has been rebuilt. The Fleet Reserve Workshop, extension of Electrical Shop, and extension of Store for tubes for Water Tube Boilers will be completed in 1904–5.

Sheerness.—The extension of Boiler Shop will be completed in 1903–4. The Drainage Improvements will be finished in 1904–5.

Portsmouth.—The new Pumping Station for Docks 7 and 10, new Chain Cable Store, and the extension of No. 13 Dock are expected to be completed in 1904–5; and considerable progress will also be made towards the completion of the new Steam Factory.

Devonport.—The railway lines round Main Storehouses, and the Caisson for No. 2 Dock will be finished during 1904–5.

Portland.—Berthing for Torpedo Boat Destroyers has already been commenced and considerable progress will be made with this work in 1904–5, in which year the three new Official Residences and new Canteen will be well advanced.

Malta.—The work of renewing Wharf Walls in French Creek is progressing. Buildings are being provided for use in connexion with the Hydraulic Dock purchased this financial year.

Hong Kong.—The new Gun Mounting Store will be practically finished in 1903–4.

Dredging.—The important Dredging at Bermuda is practically completed. A Dredger is being sent to Wei Hai Wei to continue the dredging necessary there.

Victualling Yards.—The Slaughterhouse at Chatham, the Cold Meat Store at Gibraltar, and the adaptation of War Department property for Victualling purposes at Malta will practically all be completed in 1904–5.

The Slaughterhouse at Malta has been completed.

Coaling Depôts.—A Store for patent fuel at Mauritius will be erected during 1904–5.

Hospitals.—The new block at Haslar for Officer patients, and important alterations and additions at Jamaica are expected to be completed in 1904–5.

Training Colleges.—The main buildings of the Cadets' College at Osborne will be completed during 1904–5. Accommodation is being provided on shore for Boys of Training Establishments at Shotley and Queensferry.

The principal new Works in 1904–5 are:—

Chatham.—Additional workshops, Fleet Reserve. Residence for Commander-in-Chief.

Portsmouth.—Accommodation and storage for Submarines. Workshop for Fleet Reserve.

Devonport.—Railways—North and South Yards. New jetty and railways between Nos. 2 and 3 Slips—South Yard.

Deal.—New church.

Hong Kong.—Torpedo range.

Sydney.—Additional accommodation and victualling store.

APPENDIX I.

PROGRESS UNDER THE NAVAL WORKS LOAN ACTS.

Enclosure and Defence of Harbours.

Gibraltar.—The Admiralty Mole Extension and the Detached Mole are completed, except the heads of the Moles, where the batteries and lighthouses, &c., are still in hand.

The dredging of the harbour is well advanced, and a large area has been dredged to the required depth.

The Commercial Mole is nearly completed, and will be brought into use in a few months' time.

Portland.—The new breakwaters enclosing the harbour are completed, except certain work on the heads, which is still in progress.

Dover.—Admiralty Pier Extension.—The foundation course has now reached the head at the far end of the work, being a distance of 1,948 feet from the original head of the Pier.

East Reclamation is completed, except a short length of coping.

East Arm of Breakwater.—The foundation course has been laid for a length of 2,842 feet, the low-water course for 2,625 feet, and the work completed, except parapet, for a length of 2,542 feet.

Malta Breakwater.—Much progress has been made under the contract for the construction of Ricasoli and St. Elmo Breakwaters.

Adapting Naval Ports, &c.

Keyham Dockyard Extension.—Graving Dock No. 4.—Complete with the exception of the upper parts of the Caisson Camber. The erection of the Caisson is rapidly advancing.

Graving Dock No. 5.—Complete with the exception of the upper parts of the Caisson Cambers. The erection of the Caisson at North end has made good progress and the one at the South end is well in hand.

Graving Dock No. 6.—Complete with the exception of the Entrances, and the upper part of the Caisson Cambers.

Entrance Lock.—The East Wall has been built to a height of 5 feet below coping. The West Wall has been built to the underside of coping, except a short length at the North End. The North Caisson Camber is built to within 15 feet of coping and the South Camber to within 17 feet of coping.

Closed Basin.—About 1,370,000 cubic yards of mud have been excavated and removed.

Tidal Basin.—The enclosing walls are well in hand, and about 7,000 cubic yards of mud have been removed.

Outer Wall of Main Works.—All the Columns have been sunk for the foundations and a length of about 1,950 feet of Wharf Wall has been completed.

The Pumping Station and machinery have been erected.

Gibraltar Dockyard Extension.—A large portion of the Shops and Store Buildings are completed and in use.

No. 3 Dock is practically completed, except the Caisson, which is still in hand.

Nos. 1 and 2 Docks are being rapidly advanced.

The Pumping Station and Machinery have been erected.

APPENDIX I.

Hong Kong Dockyard Extension.—The Reclamation in front of the Naval Yard and War Department properties is making good progress. The Wharf Walls of the New Basin are in hand. The excavation for the Dock is nearly completed.

Simon's Bay Dockyard Extension.—The Breakwater and the Walls enclosing the New Basin have been commenced.

Malta Dockyard Extension.—Progress on the two new Docks being built by Contract has not been very satisfactory. More of the Subsidiary works have been completed and others are well in hand.

Bermuda Dockyard Extension.—About 300 feet of the foundations for Wharf Wall are completed. The mass work and horizontal blockwork on western arm are completed except coping. About 5,000 of the large concrete blocks have been made.

Chatham Dockyard Extension.—The Contract for the New River Wall Upnor Entrance, has been let and the work has already been commenced. Arrangements are being made for the provision of extensive railway facilities.

Sheerness Depot for Torpedo Boat Destroyers.—The site for the extension of Nos. 4 and 5 Docks is being cleared. The Sites for the Electric Shop, Mast Shed, Torpedo Tube Store, &c., are being prepared.

Deepening Harbours and Approaches.

At *Portsmouth* the outer and inner bars and the approach channel are completed. Eleven berths have been dredged and two others are nearly finished. Of the cruiser berths in Fountain Lake one group of three is completed and another group is one-third done.

At *Devonport* the dredging above Saltash Bridge is practically completed. The area is now being swept over to remove shoal patches. The work below Saltash Bridge has been commenced.

Chatham Dock.—The construction of the Dock is practically completed. The foundations for Machinery Shop are finished and the Contract for the superstructure has been let.

Coaling Facilities.

Gibraltar.—The Coal Island, commenced last year, is progressing satisfactorily.

Kowloon.—The Briquette Factory has been taken over and the construction of the Breakwater and Coaling Jetty is in hand.

Steps are being taken to cover in a considerable proportion of the Coal Yards at Malta.

Property has been acquired for the establishment of a Coaling Depot at Devonport.

Coaling accommodation is being provided at Wei-hai-Wei.

Arrangements are being made for the early commencement of a Coaling Depot at Ascension.

Naval Barracks, &c.

Chatham Naval Barracks.—The Barracks were completed and occupied on the 30th April 1903. Certain additional works which have been sanctioned are in progress.

Portsmouth Naval Barracks.—The Barracks were completed and occupied in September 1903.

Chatham Naval Hospital.—All the buildings are making good progress, and the new Hospital will be completed and occupied by the end of the year.

Magazines.—Gibraltar.—The Magazines at the back of the Ragged Staff are in hand, and a large amount of excavation has been carried out in the rock.

The work incidental to the original Scheme has been well advanced, but it has been found necessary to amplify that Scheme in view of the increased requirements of the Fleet

Further laboratory accommodation is being provided, and the system of railway communications greatly extended at Chatham, whilst extensive further arrangements are being made to meet additional requirements principally at Naval Stations abroad.

Coast Guard and Royal Naval Reserve Batteries.—Good progress has been made in acquiring sites for new Coast Guard Stations and Royal Naval Reserve Batteries. In many cases Contracts have been let and the works are proceeding.

Torpedo Ranges.—At Portsmouth the extension of the Horsea Island Range is expected to be commenced very shortly. The arrangements for the construction of a new Torpedo Range at another Port are under consideration.

Electric Light and Power in Naval Establishments.—The Contract has been let for the Electric Generating Station at Pembroke, and the work is now in hand.

At Chatham, Devonport, and Portsmouth, preliminary arrangements have been made and Contracts will be let shortly. At Malta, work has commenced in clearing Site, and Contract for the Chimney Shaft is about to be let. Contract for the building will follow shortly. In the cases of all the smaller Naval Establishments for which there is provision for Electric Light in the current Naval Works Loan Act, drawings are now practically completed and tenders will be called for within a few months.

February 1st, 1904. S.

APPENDIX II.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXXX.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Bishopric of Bristol [H.L.]	*Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*	Read 1^a 19th Feb. (347)
Newcastle Chapter Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Bishop of St. Albans*	Read 2^a 19th Feb. (347) Committee Report 25th Feb. (940). Read 3^a passed 1st Mar. (1349)
Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Read 2^a 25th Feb. (945)
Polling Districts (County Councils) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Read 2^a 25th Feb. (944)
*Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^o 25th Feb. (940)
Prevention of Cruelty to Children Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Alverstone*	Read 1^o 29th Feb. (1205)
*Site for Duke of York's School [H.L.]	*Lord Windsor*	Read 1^a 26th Feb. (1110)
Wild Birds' Protection Acts Amendment		Read 1^a 25th Feb. (940)
Weights and Measures [Metric System) [H.L.]	*Lord Belhaven*	Read 2^a 23rd Feb. (674)

(B) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Bills of Exchange	*Sir Wm. Holland*	Read 1^o 18th Feb. (261)
Canal Traffic	*Sir Wm. Holland*	Read 1^o 18th Feb. (261)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals)	*Mr. Haldane*	Read 1° 29th Feb. (1256)
Congested Districts (Scotland) Act (1897) Amendment	*Mr. Ainsworth*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (26)
Cottage Homes	*Mr. John Hutton*	Read 1° 19th Feb. (515)
Crofters, Holding (Scotland) Acts Amendment	*Mr. Ainsworth*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (26)
Crofters, Holding (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment	*Mr. Weir*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (262)
*Dogs	*Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes*	Read 1° 19th Feb. (516)
*Electric Lighting (London)	*Mr. Gerald Balfour*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (25)
*False Statements (Companies)	*Sir Robt. Finlay*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (1008)
Foreign Marriages	*Mr. Macdona*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (1008)
House Letting (Scotland)	*Mr. Alexander Cross*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (260)
Housing of the Working Classes, etc.	*Mr. Nannetti*	Read 1° 22nd Feb. (574)
Jurors' Expenses	*Mr. Lloyd Morgan*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (261)
Land Values Taxation (Scotland)	*Mr. Caldwell*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (26)
Liquor Traffic Local (Veto)	*Mr. Whittaker*	Read 1° 22nd Feb. (575)
Local Authorities (Officers Superannuation)	*Capt. Jessel*	Read 1° 19th Feb. (515)
Local Authorities (Qualification of Women	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 1st March (1369)
Married Womens' Property Act (1882) Amendment	*Mr. Kimber*	Read 1° 29th Feb. (1256)
Mines (Eight Hours)	*Mr. Osmond Williams*	Second Reading (Adjourned) 26th Feb. (1195)
Mortgage of Premises	*Sir Wm. Holland*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (261)
Municipal Corporations	*Mr. Cripps*	Read 1° 23rd Feb. (738)
Musical Copyright	*Mr. Mount*	Read 2° 26th Feb. (1156)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies (No. 2)	*Mr. Gretton*	Read 1° 2nd March (1490)
*Penal Servitude	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (262)
Parliamentary Voters and Elections	*Mr. J. Sinclair*	Read 1° 29th Feb. (1256)
Pharmacy	*Mr. Lough*	Read 1° 29th Feb. (1256)
*Police Superannuation	*Mr. Cochrane*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (261)
*Provisional Order (Marriages)	*Mr. Cochrane*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (261)
Rating of Machinery	*Mr. Chapman*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (262)
Registration of Firms	*Mr. Emmott*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (25)
Resident Magistrates (Belfast)	*Sir James Haslett*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (25)
*Sale of Butter	*Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes*	Read 1° 19th Feb. (516)
School Board Electorate (Scotland)	*Mr. Weir*	Read 1° 18th Feb. (262)
Town and County Councils (Qualification of Women (Scotland)	*Mr. Parker Smith*	Read 1° 26th Feb. (1204)
Trades Unions and Trade Disputes (No. 2)	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 22nd Feb. (574)
Vaccination Prosecutions	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 1st March (1369)
Vagrants	*Mr. Claude Hay*	Read 1° 25th Feb. (1107)
Wild Birds' Protection Acts Amendment	*Mr. Sydney Buxton*	Committee Report 22 Feb. (671) Read 3° passed 23rd Feb. (832)
Winter Assizes (Ireland)	*Sir James Haslett*	Read 1° 17th Feb. (25)

APPENDIX III.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1904.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[*In continuance of List given in preceding Volume.*]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland in substitution for Rule 28 of 1st May, 1903 [41 and 42 Vic., c. 66, s. 6]	23 February	40 days
Western Australia,—Copy of Electoral Act, No. XXXV. of 1904 [13 and 14 Vic., c. 59, s. 32]	26 February	30 days
Education (Scotland) (Code 1904),—Copy of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, with Appendices, by the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in Scotland [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	1 March	One month
Factory and Workshop Acts (Earthenware and China,—Copy of Amended Special Rules, dated 19th March, 1902, and 18th February, 1904, for the Manufacture and Decoration of Earthenware and China in certain Factories and Workshops, as established by the Awards of the Arbitrator, Chester Jones, esquire [58 and 59 Vic., c. 37, s. 28]	2 March	40 days

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Finances, State of—Annual Report presented, *Feb. 23*, 674.

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    - *Os.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2*, 1519; Mr. G. Bowles, 1519; Mr. Pretyman, 1533.
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  - *Os.* Mr. G. Bowles, *Mar. 1*, 1377; Mr. Pretyman, 1398,
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  - *Os.* Mr. Pretyman, *Feb. 29*, 1272; Sir H. Campbell - Bannerman, 1307; Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar 1*, 1410, 1411.
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    - *Os.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 29*, 1318; Mr. Pretyman, 1336.
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  - *Os.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2*, 1519; Mr. G. Bowles, 1519; Mr. Pretyman, 1533.
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  - *Os.* Mr. Pretyman, *Feb. 29*, 1267.
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  - *Os.* Mr. H. Roberts, *Feb. 29*, 1277.
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    - *Os.* Mr. Whitley, *Feb. 23*, 773; Sir C. Dilke, 774; Mr. Pretyman, 775.
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    - *Os.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 29*, 1319; Sir F. Flannery, 1325.
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Mr. Alfred Lyttelton.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Marquess of Lansdowne.

Secretary of State for India
Mr. W. St. John Brodrick.

Secretary for Scotland
Mr. A. Graham Murray.

Secretary of State for War
Mr. H. O. Arnold-Forster.

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